RETURN OF THE CUT THROUGH

BLADE SHOW WEST PREVIEW

BLADE SHOW West

BLADE

THE WORLD'S #1 KNIFE PUBLICATION

NOVEMBER 2025
WWW.BLADEMAG.COM

HOGUE KNIVES EXTRAK

KNIVES LIE, DAGGERS DON'T
Learn the Keys Of Combat Art Knives

DOMINIC BINKERT VARIS

GRUNTS FOR THE HUNT
Workhorse Cutters For the Outdoors

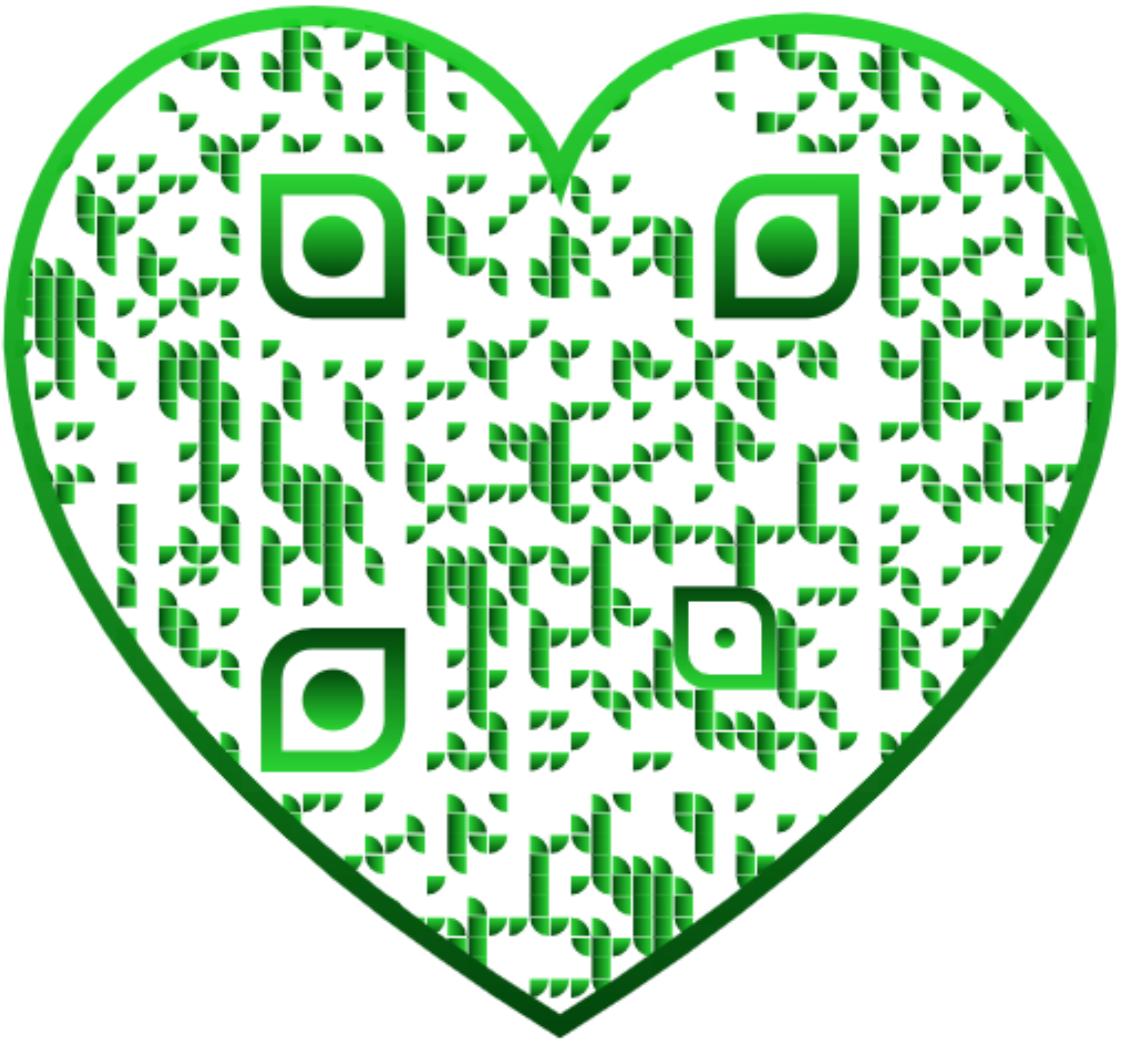
HOMEGROWN SKINNERS
Take Field Dressing To the Next Level

WHITE RIVER MODEL 1

WARRANT CLAIMS GONE WACKY
From Legit To Downright Bizarre

GAME TAMERS

US $9.99 CAN $10.99
11
6 02648 50251 1



CASE XX

CROSS ROADS

WHERE THE FUTURE OF TRADITION MEETS YOUR POCKET.

The Case Crossroads Series XR Sod Buster® Jr. remakes the traditional Case '37 pattern in its original frame but with added modern features and a precision build. End-to-end handle materials like burlap laminate, G-10 and wood composites. A stonewashed S35VN stainless steel blade. And a screwed together build that assures the knife's integrity and performance over time.

Features like these all serve as reminders that these knives are made in our only factory in Bradford, PA. The Case Crossroads Series - putting the future of traditional knives back in your pocket.

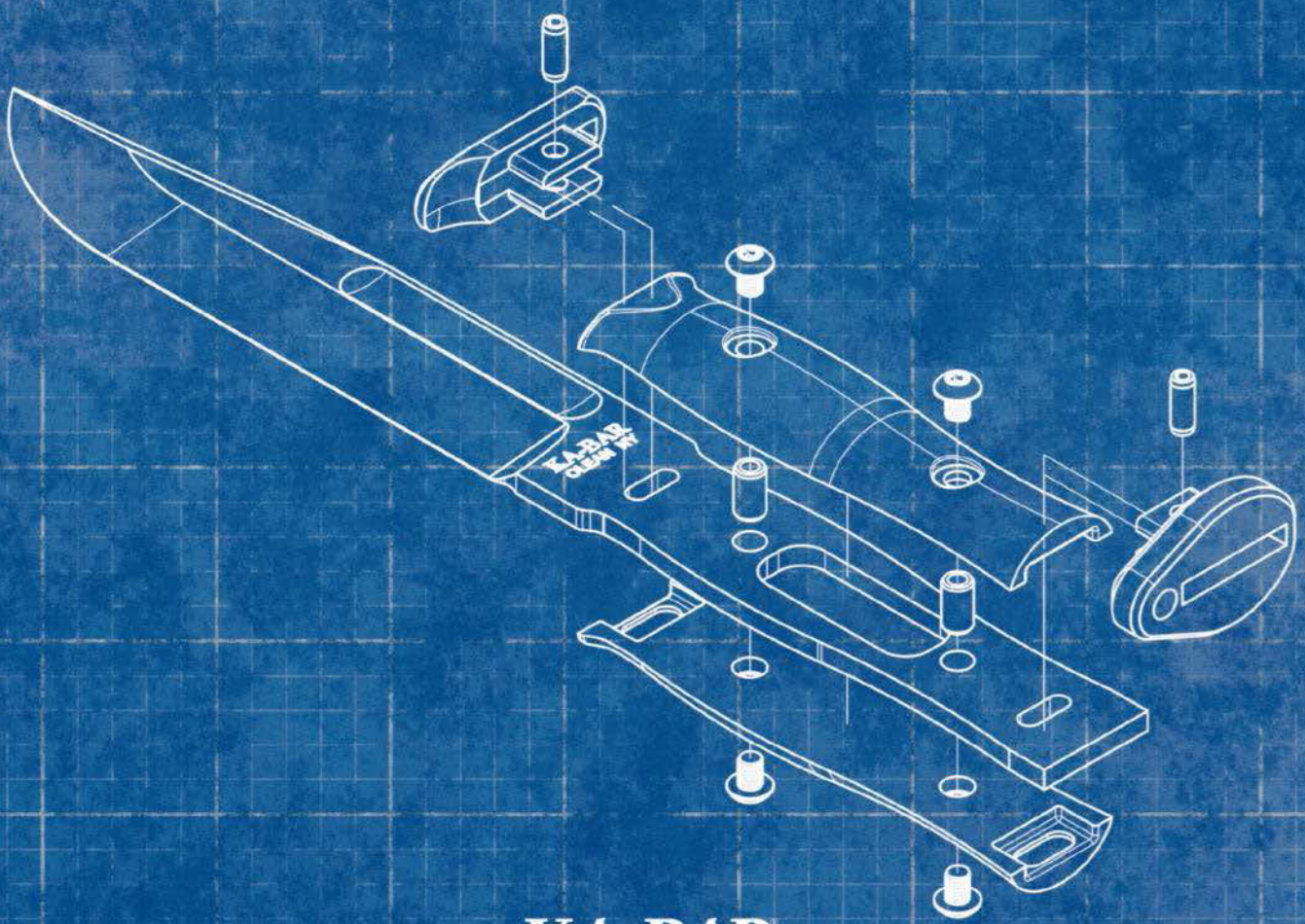
CASE, CASE XX, XX ARE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF W.R. CASE & SONS CUTLERY COMPANY. © 2025 W.R. CASE & SONS CUTLERY COMPANY
DYMALUX IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF COUSINEAU WOOD PRODUCTS OF MAINE, LLC

DEPARTMENT OF PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

KA-BAR, OLEAN NEW YORK U.S.A.

DECONSTRUCTED VIEW
THE SLABBY

7	11.875	FULL TANG
BLADE LENGTH	OVERALL LENGTH	CONSTRUCTION TYPE:



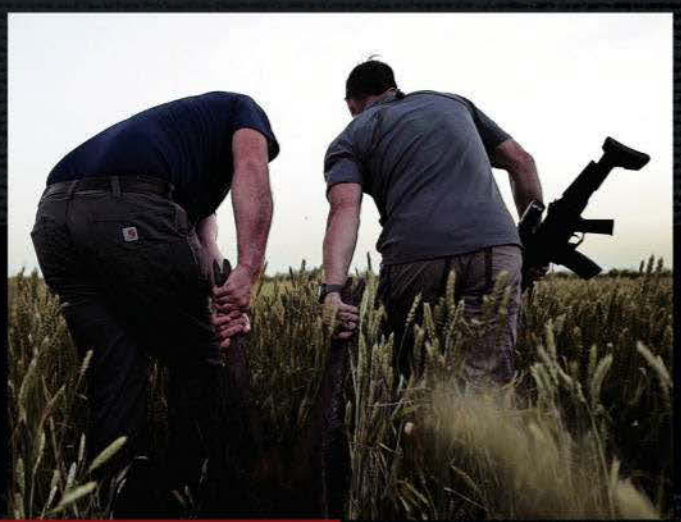
KA-BAR

STATE UNION

KA-BAR.com

RECOIL TV

WWW.RECOIL.TV



DOWNLOAD THE FREE APP

RecoilTV is a **2A** friendly streaming platform created to entertain and inform you on the latest guns and gear associated with the firearms lifestyle.

AVAILABLE ON

Download on the App Store | Download on Apple TV | GET IT ON Google Play | Roku | fire tv | Chromecast

HONEST. RELEVANT. UNFILTERED.

THE PREMIER AUTHORITY FOR FIREARMS NEWS AND MEDIA THE WAY YOU WANT AND DESERVE.

PRESENTED BY

BCM®

TIMNEY TRIGGERS USA

EOTECH

NOVEMBER 2025
BLADE®
THE WORLD'S #1 KNIFE PUBLICATION

CONTENTS

24
Alex Harrison grinds away.

64
Megan, Mary, Ernest and Lucas Emerson at the BLADE Show.

52
Cimms, Van den Berg, Lamothe collaboration. (SharpByCoop image)

FEATURES

10 HE MADE CUTLERY COOL
Bill Adams was a genius at promoting everything knife.
By Steve Shackleford

12 HOMEGROWN SKINNERS
Made in America, these four outdoor knives have got game.
By Reuben Bolieu

14 GOOD SKINNERS AND BAD
How to tell the difference by performance and other keys.
By Reuben Bolieu

20 FALL IN!
Avail yourself of some sharp, hot knives for hunting season.
By *BLADE®* staff

24 ABOVE THE PREY
Proper blade grinds and edge geometry drive top hunting knives.
By Jason Fry

32 UTAH AWESOME
Come meet the legends of knifemaking at BLADE Show West '25.
By BLADE staff

40 A FULL SPECTRUM OF OPTIONS
Hot forged hunters provide choices and affordable prices.
By Les Robertson

46 GRUNTS FOR THE HUNT
Consider three hunting knives built for your outdoor needs.
By Dexter Ewing

52 KNIVES LIE, DAGGERS DON'T *PART I*
Form, function and purpose of the most stab-ready of knives.
By Travis Fry

58 WACKY WARRANTY CLAIMS
Some warranty claims are legit–others are just plain bizarre.
By Mike Haskew

64 BLADES IN THEIR BLOOD
The Emerson Family shares decades and generations in knives.
By Mike Haskew

82 RETURN OF THE CUT THROUGH
Iconic Spyderco design appears on new H.L. Dalis exclusive.
By BLADE staff

BLADE

SPOTLIGHT

6 | SHORT CUTS
6 | HOW TO REACH US
7 | COVER STORY
45 | WHERE TO GET 'EM
70 | HANDMADE GALLERY
72 | 50 YEARS AGO IN *BLADE®*
74 | SHOW CALENDAR
76 | BLADE SHOPPE
78 | WHERE TO NET 'EM
79 | AD INDEX
80 | NEXT IN BLADE

Handle of the Fallkniven F1L3GMM. (Marty Stanfield image)

Corey Dunlap and his BLADE Show West '24 winner.

BLADE

A.G. Russell™ Bird & Trout
AGBT-C22-D2 ——— $59.95
To order, call 1-800-255-9034.
PURCHASE ONLINE AT agrussell.com

A.G. Russell™
KNIVES
For a free catalog, call 479-878-1644, Dept #H1125
2900 S. 26th St. Rogers, AR 72758
© 2025 A.G. Russell Knives

22nd State Repeals Auto Ban

Delaware became the 22nd state to repeal switchblade/automatic knife bans or restrictions with the signing July 30 of bipartisan SB 108 by Governor Matt Meyer.

According to the Knife Rights website kniferights.org, the bill not only removes restrictions on the sale or possession of automatics in Delaware, it also amends the "Deadly Weapons" exemption for "ordinary pocketknife" by deleting "folding" in order to cover all knife types. It also increases the legal blade length from 3 to 3.75 inches.

"SB 108 is a common-sense update, modernizing Delaware's knife laws, so citizens gain the freedom to carry and use these tools responsibly without fear of legal penalty," Meyer said.

In addition to Delaware, states repealing switchblade bans or restrictions include Alaska; Colorado; Hawaii; Illinois; Indiana; Kansas; Louisiana; Maine; Michigan; Missouri; Montana; Nevada; New Hampshire; Ohio; Oklahoma; Pennsylvania; Tennessee; Texas; Vermont; Virginia; and Wisconsin.

This leaves only three states where civilian possession of automatic knives remains banned: New Mexico, Minnesota and Washington. Knife Rights is challenging Minnesota's ban in federal court. Washington is in the Ninth Circuit where KR's federal lawsuit against California's partial ban is proceeding on appeal. A win there would apply to Washington's ban.

For more information visit kniferights.org and also akti.org.

Bill Adams 1937-2025

William Calhoun "Bill" Adams, knife entrepreneur, defender of all things knife, BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-of-Fame® member and invaluable friend of the knife community, passed away August 10. He was 87.

Bill Adams with his Case Apollo Astronaut knife at BLADE Show 2019.

Known for his easy smile, snow white beard and amiable North Georgia drawl, Bill was liked and admired by many in the industry. He founded Atlanta Cutlery and, with Hank Reinhardt, co-founded Museum Replicas, both in Conyers, Georgia. Bill's retail operations required him to travel the globe in search of the finest knives, swords and accouterments, including England, Ireland, Africa, India, parts of Central and South America, and all over the USA.

He served as president of the Antique Bowie Knife Association and helped found the Military Equipment and Weapons Collectors Association. He also helped found the Cutlery Collectors Legislative Committee, aka the CCLC, forerunner to today's two leading pro-knife-legislation groups, Knife Rights and the American Knife & Tool Institute. In 1995, Bill was inducted into the Cutlery Hall of Fame.

He was a knowledgeable, gifted author, editing *Sheffield Exhibition Knives* and co-writing *The Antique Bowie Knife Book*, both of which are go-to guides for fans and aficionados of vintage Sheffield-made and antique bowies, respectively. He also was a dedicated knife collector, winning several awards for his wide-ranging collections at the BLADE Show. He retired to Roberta, Georgia, to live along the Flint River, where he enjoyed a quiet, peaceful and happy life.

He is survived by his sister-in-law Dee Anne Adams, his nephew David A. Adams and wife Cheryl, and dear friend and travel partner Elaine Barnes. The family wishes to express its thanks to Bill's Roberta, Georgia, friends, especially Charles and Kate Rice, who cared for and treated him like family.

For more on Bill Adams, see page 10.

For the latest knives, knife news, trends and more, visit ***blademag.com,*** BLADE®*'s popular Instagram page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***X(Twitter)****.*

BLADE

HOW TO REACH US!

VISIT US ONLINE AT WWW.BLADEMAG.COM TO:
- Sign up for our free newsletter.
- Renew your magazine subscription. There's a subscription link in the nav bar.
- Comment on our site stories written by *BLADE*® staff members and others.

LOOK FOR BLADE MAGAZINE ON:

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES: Visit us on the web at www.blademag.com or call 877-485-6426.

BOOK SALES: Visit us at www.gundigeststore.com or call 920-471-4522.

BACK ISSUES FOR SALE: Subject to Availability. Call 920-471-4522.

ADVERTISING: Contact Lori McDaniel at 715-498-3768 or lori@gundigest.com, or request a media kit by writing to: BLADE, 5583 W. Waterford Ln., Suite D, Appleton, WI 54913.

LETTERS OR ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS:
Steve Shackleford, Editor
BLADE Magazine
5583 W. Waterford Ln., Suite D
Appleton, WI 54913
or email steve@blademag.com.

Designed by Hogue Knives President **Jim Bruhns,** the **Hogue Knives Extrak** (page 46) is a lightweight, agile fixed-blade hunter. CPM MagnaCut stainless blade steel in a full, flat grind and a lean handle of textured orange G-10 augment the package.

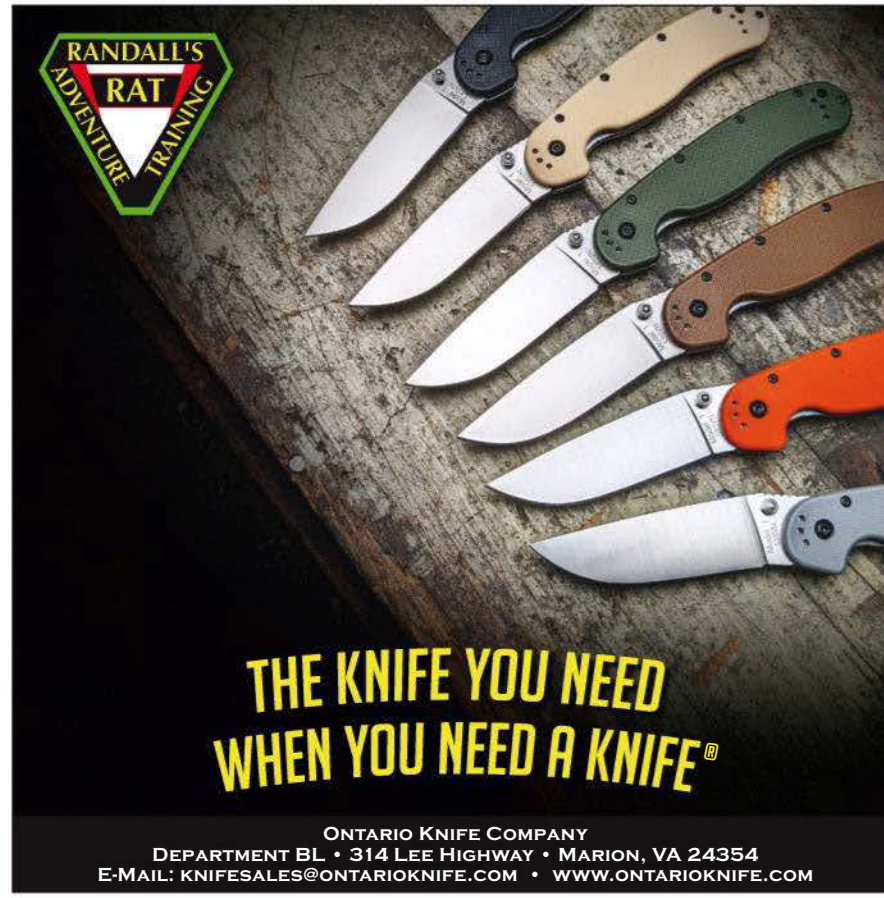
The **Varis** (page 20) by **Dominic Binkert** won **Best Hunting Knife** at the **2025 Queensland Knife Show**. A member of the **Australian Knifemakers Guild**, Dominic flat ground the blade from Nitro V stainless steel and also uses orange G-10 scales.

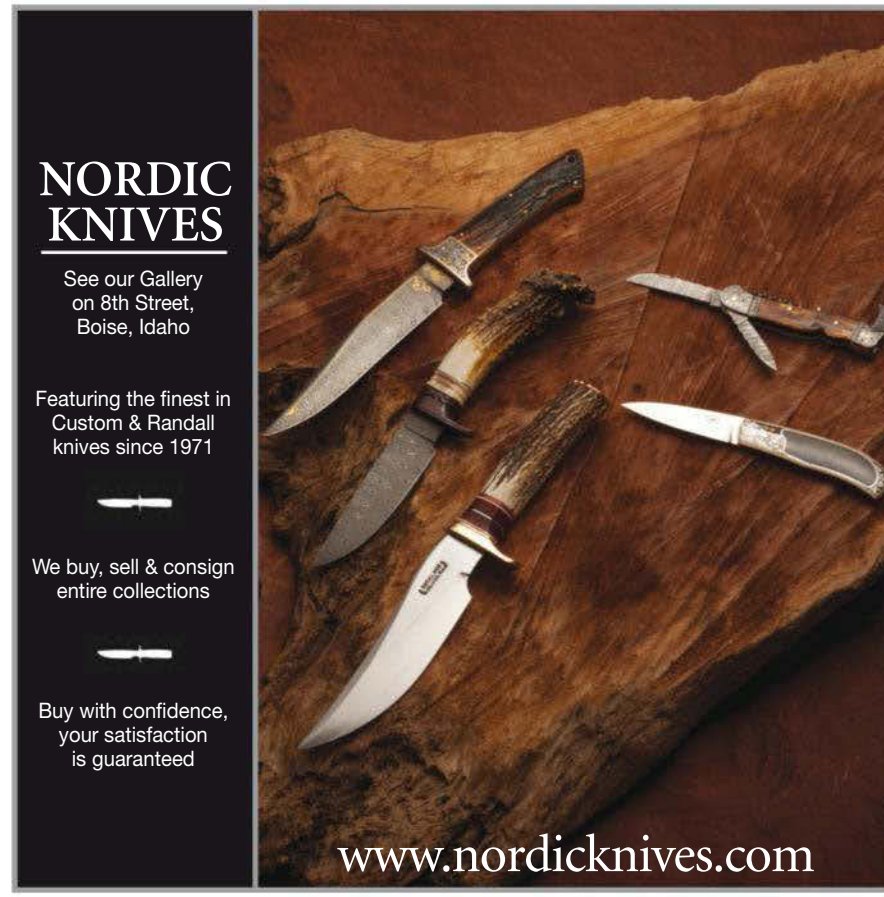
Designed for detailed work without sacrificing length, the **White River Knife & Tool Model 1 Skinner** (page 12) combines CPM S35VN stainless blade steel and yet another orange G-10 handle. A large choil and gimping enhance control during delicate skinning tasks.

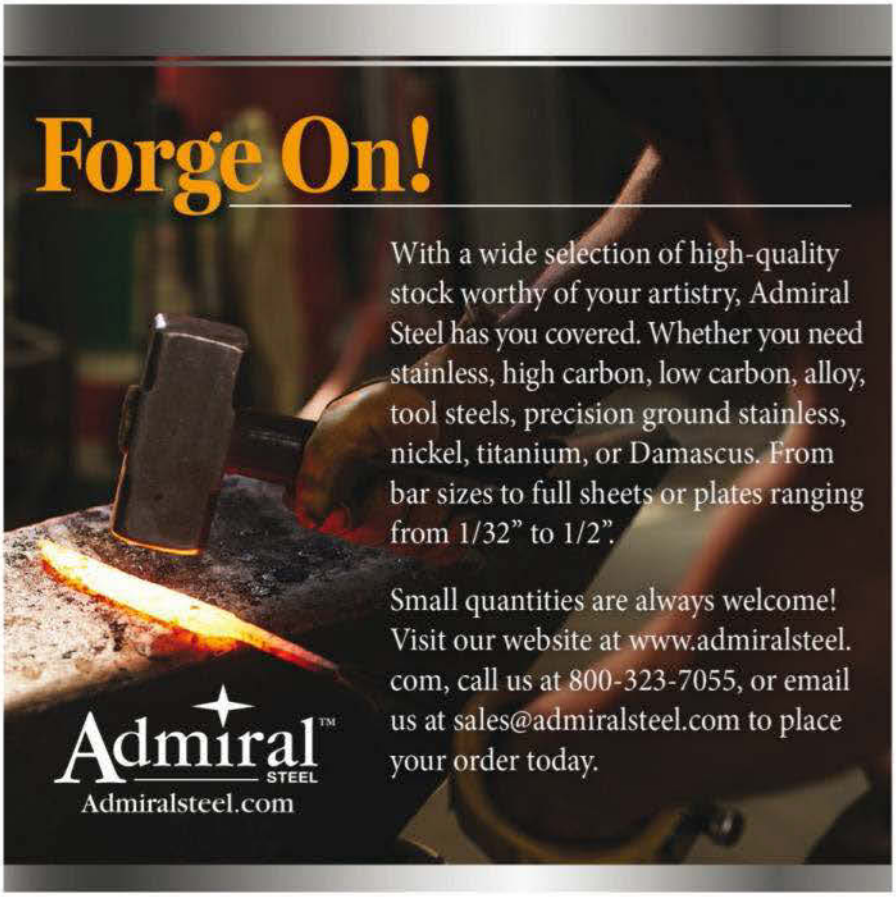
Available exclusively through **H.L. Dalis Inc.**, the **Spyderco Para Military 2** (page 82) is a rebirth of Spyderco's vintage cut-through design. **Marty Stanfield** photographed the Extrak and **Rod Hoare** shot the Varis. Spyderco and White River supplied the images of their knives.

For the latest knives, knife news, trends and more, visit ***blademag.com,*** BLADE®*'s popular Instagram page* ***@blade_magazine,*** *and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***X (Twitter).***

BLADE




NORDIC KNIVES
See our Gallery on 8th Street, Boise, Idaho
Featuring the finest in Custom & Randall knives since 1971
We buy, sell & consign entire collections
Buy with confidence, your satisfaction is guaranteed
www.nordicknives.com


Forge On!
With a wide selection of high-quality stock worthy of your artistry, Admiral Steel has you covered. Whether you need stainless, high carbon, low carbon, alloy, tool steels, precision ground stainless, nickel, titanium, or Damascus. From bar sizes to full sheets or plates ranging from 1/32" to 1/2".
Small quantities are always welcome! Visit our website at www.admiralsteel.com, call us at 800-323-7055, or email us at sales@admiralsteel.com to place your order today.
Admiral STEEL
Admiralsteel.com

BLADE®
THE WORLD'S #1 KNIFE PUBLICATION
Vol. LII, No. 1, November 2025

BladeMag.com
E-mail us: steve@blademag.com

5583 W. Waterford Ln., Suite D
Appleton, WI 54913
Phone: 920.471.4522 • Fax: 920.471.0031

CARIBOU MEDIA GROUP PUBLISHER
JIM SCHLENDER

EDITOR
STEVE SHACKLEFORD

MANAGING EDITOR
LAURA PELTAKIAN

ONLINE EDITOR
ELWOOD SHELTON

SR. ART DIRECTOR
GENE COO

ART DIRECTOR
NADIA SVERDLOVA

FIELD EDITORS
MSG KIM BREED, ABE ELIAS, DEXTER EWING, ED FOWLER, MIKE HASKEW, B.R. HUGHES, LES ROBERTSON, JOE SZILASKI, RICHARD D. WHITE

ADVERTISING SALES

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER
RYAN FARNER
760.809.8729 • ryan@recoilweb.com

SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
ALEX OSTROWSKI
920.212.5677 • alex@gundigest.com

SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
DAVID FIGG
813.418.1060 • dfigg@recoilweb.com

SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
LORI MCDANIEL
715.498.3768 • lori@gundigest.com

ADVERTISING ASSISTANTS
CHING CORNFORTH, AMY TURPIN

GUN DIGEST MEDIA, LLC

GM/PUBLISHER
GLEN CASTLE

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
JENNIFER SEXSTONE

NETWORK MANAGER
LUKE HARTLE

NEWSSTAND SALES
NPS MEDIA GROUP
lmasaoay@npsmediagroup.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS SERVICES
U.S.: 877.485.6426
E-mail: support@blademagazineservice.com
P.O. Box 182, Williamsport, PA 17703

BLADE SHOW · BLADE SHOW Texas · GunDigest · BLADE SHOW West

BLADE® Magazine, (ISSN 1064-5853) is published monthly by Caribou Media Group, LLC dba Gun Digest Media LLC. Corporate headquarters is 5583 W. Waterford Ln., Suite D, Appleton, WI 54913. Periodicals postage paid at Appleton, WI 54913, and at additional mailing offices. Canadian Agreement No. 40665675. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to P.O. Box 182, Williamsport, PA 17703. *BLADE®* and its logo are registered trademarks. Other names and logos referred to or displayed in editorial or advertising content may be trademarked or copyrighted. *BLADE* assumes no responsibility for unsolicited materials sent to it. Publisher and advertisers are not liable for typographical errors that may appear in prices or descriptions in advertisements. The possession, transportation and sale of certain types of knives is restricted or prohibited by federal, state and local laws. *BLADE®* and Caribou Media rely upon the fact that collectors, purveyors/dealers, exhibitors, advertisers and manufacturers are expected to know and comply with these regulations.

GET YOURSELF THE RIGHT BLADE FOR ANY HAZARD YOU FACE!
PVK
DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP
PYM A1825PVK
CHECK OUT THE LATEST INVENTORY IN STORE!
OR WWW.PVK.COM • 702.704.4069

He Made Cutlery Cool

In every field of endeavor are those who exemplify it. They may be crusty character types that entertain and influence endlessly by the force of their personality. They may be fountains of knowledge that never cease to amaze with their ability to retrieve hidden gems of history or wisdom. These are but two qualities BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-of-Fame® member Bill Adams possessed, though he had many more.

He passed away August 10 (page 6) after a knife career that spanned over half a century, a career that paralleled the modern age of knives. He wrote about knives, traveled the world in search of them, created retail businesses to sell them, collected them, fought anti-knife legislation in his undying zeal to protect them, and otherwise sheltered them in his own personal fiefdom of sharp.

Bill was an engaging combination of authenticity and pop culture. He bore a facial resemblance to Ernest Hemingway and dressed like the title character of the 1990s TV mainstay *Matlock*, which fit perfectly with his ability to promote, chronicle and defend all things knife. His eternal smile and folksy North Georgia drawl were disarming. He made you want to just stand and listen to him talk, no matter the topic.

He was the genius behind Atlanta Cutlery, a mail-order catalog business when it started in 1971 that he grew into an international emporium of knives, swords and other edged exotica and accouterments that he acquired from his far-ranging world travels. In 1985 he and Hank Reinhardt founded Museum Replicas to sell medieval swords and armor, much of which Reinhardt was a natural to promote thanks to his legendary career as a master of swordplay in the Society of Creative Anachronism (SCA) and as a re-enactor in Renaissance events. Bill eventually sold Atlanta Cutlery in 1995, the same year he was inducted into the Cutlery Hall of Fame.

He loved *BLADE®* Magazine. In fact, he wrote stories in the first two issues of what was then *The American Blade*: "Sheffield Knives" in the May-June 1973 issue and "The Men Who Made the Sheffield Knives" in the July-August issue of the same year. The former he co-wrote with Hugh W. Brock and the latter by himself under the byline of William C. Adams. The stories covered the golden age of knifemaking in Sheffield, England in the 19th and 20th centuries and before. He was able to write the stories in the first person because he visited what was left of the actual factories themselves. There he saw some of the old knives and tools and studied the records and even the personal notes written in the 19th century by George Wostenholm of Wostenholm I*XL.

Bill wrote other stories for BLADE and the *KNIVES* annual and edited the comprehensive *Sheffield Exhibition Knives*. However, it was his collaboration with Cutlery Hall-of-Famer Bruce Voyles and Terry Moss on the 550-plus pages of *The Antique Bowie Knife Book* that continues to resonate 35 years after its publication. It is jampacked with stunning full-page color pictures of five- and six-figure 19th-century bowies from the extensive collections of Bob Berryman, Charles Schreiner and other leading collectors. As Cutlery Hall-of-Famer Phil Lobred wrote, "For a fee, collectors could have their knife photographed and put in the book. The smart collectors saw the advantage and had their great pieces immortalized … [it] became an instant antique bowie knife bible and is still the book to have."

It also was with Voyles that Bill helped spearhead the Cutlery Collectors Legislative Committee, the precursor to today's pro-knife groups, the American Knife & Tool Institute and Knife Rights. A staunch conservative, Bill was ardently political and loved those who fought the good fight. Of one pro-knife activist he wrote, "He's willing to waller in the s___ of politics, and I appreciate a man of his bravery and resilience."

No one "wallered" in knives and knife culture quite like Bill. His life reads like an adventure novel, though, like it's said, truth is stranger than fiction. In Bill's case, it's much more entertaining, too.

Bill Adams inducts Bernard Levine into the BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall of Fame® during the 1994 BLADE Show awards banquet.

For more on Bill Adams, see the story on page 6 and visit https://blademag.com/blade-magazine-cutlery-hall-of-fame.

For the latest knives, knife news, trends and more, visit ***blademag.com,*** BLADE®*'s popular Instagram page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***X (Twitter)****.*

BLADE

MORPHY
AUCTIONS

FIREARMS & MILITARIA

DECEMBER 16, 17 & 18, 2025

Featuring Knives From the Collection of Frank Brownell

JIM SORNBERGER CUSTOM ABALONE
AND PAUA SHELL BOWIE KNIFE

DON LOZIER CUSTOM DAGGER
ENGRAVED BY JULIE WARENSKI

JOE KIOUS "PERSEUS SAGA" LARGE CUSTOM
DOUBLE POCKET LOCKET AUTO KNIFE

JIM SORNBERGER GOLD QUARTZ
CALIFORNIA DAGGER

PETER MARTIN ORNATELY EMBELLISHED
CUSTOM LOCKBACK FOLDER

KEN STEIGERWALT CUSTOM FIGHTER

BRIAN CHOVANCE STATELY BUTTERFLY KNIFE

LARGE BILL MORAN BOWIE KNIFE
WITH PRONOUNCED CLIP POINT BLADE

LARGE D.E. HENRY WOOD COFFIN
HANDLE BOWIE KNIFE

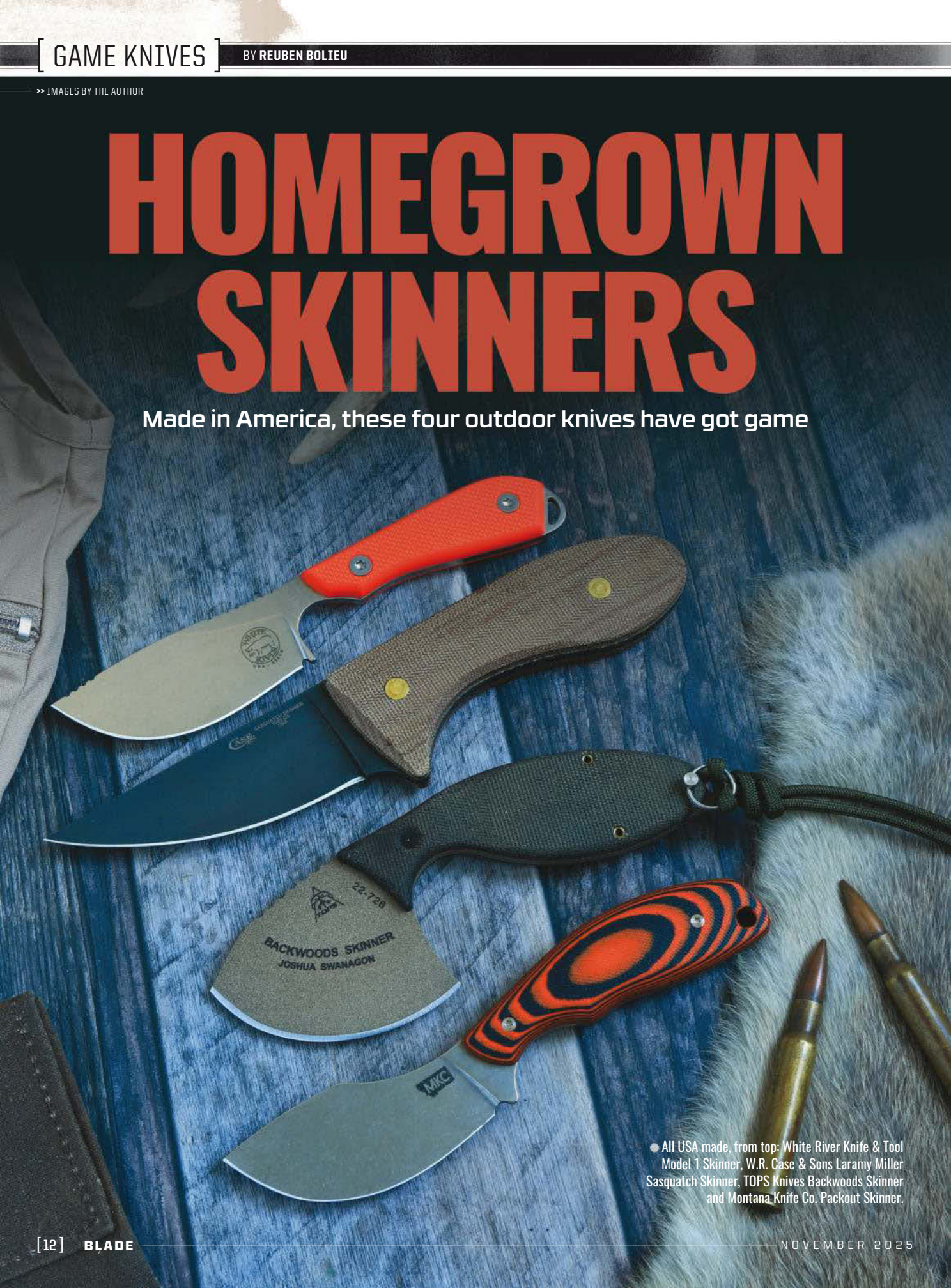
2000 N. READING ROAD | DENVER, PA 17517 | 877-968-8880 | INFO@MORPHYAUCTIONS.COM
MORPHYAUCTIONS.COM

BY **REUBEN BOLIEU**

>> IMAGES BY THE AUTHOR

HOMEGROWN SKINNERS

Made in America, these four outdoor knives have got game



All USA made, from top: White River Knife & Tool Model 1 Skinner, W.R. Case & Sons Laramy Miller Sasquatch Skinner, TOPS Knives Backwoods Skinner and Montana Knife Co. Packout Skinner.

A skinner is a knife purpose built for the delicate but necessary job of skinning game animals. Its singular mission: separate hide from muscle without causing a mess that makes a taxidermist weep.

Skinning knives serve specific purposes. Primarily, they glide beneath the hide with minimal resistance. This feature allows for a smoother cutting experience, making it easier to separate the skin from the meat.

Skinners also aim to minimize accidental punctures to the underlying meat or organs. This is crucial for preserving the quality of the meat and ensuring that it remains uncontaminated during the skinning process. Finally, skinners offer the control necessary for making fine cuts around joints, facial features and paws. This level of precision is essential for skilled processing, allowing for clean and efficient work.

COMPACT POWER

The Montana Knife Co. (MKC) Packout Skinner is a compact powerhouse built for precision in the field. It packs a generous belly into a tight footprint—ideal for long, clean skinning strokes. The blade offers top-tier edge retention, corrosion resistance and toughness that thrives in backcountry conditions. Full-tang construction is paired with a milled handle shaped for a secure, glove-friendly grip that stays comfortable through extended use. The ergonomic palm swell and thoughtful finger ramp give you control whether you're slicing hide or fleshing out detail work.

"IT PACKS A GENEROUS BELLY INTO A TIGHT FOOTPRINT—IDEAL FOR LONG, CLEAN SKINNING STROKES."

The grip on the Model 1 was secure and the spine's forward gimping proved useful. After an hour of skinning and deboning, the author had no complaints. The thin grind made cutting effortless and the taper is outstanding.

A custom-molded sheath complements the package, providing secure retention and versatile carry options: horizontal, vertical or pack-mounted. This knife doesn't just

The Sasquatch easily feathered wood that took a spark from a stout ferro rod. The edge was sharp and the spine has a good 90-degree angle for fire starting.

W.R. CASE & SONS LARAMY MILLER SASQUATCH SKINNER

BLADE LENGTH: 3.94"
BLADE @THICKEST: .125"
BLADE MATERIAL: 1095 carbon steel
BLADE FINISH: Caswell™
SCALES: Natural Micarta®
WEIGHT: 8.38 ozs.
OVERALL LENGTH: 8.75"
SHEATH: Brown leather
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: U.S.A.
MSRP: $196.99

GOOD SKINNERS AND BAD

A good skinner slices smoothly without requiring brute force, retaining the cutting edge throughout the job. It cleans easily, especially around the scales, and feels intuitive in your hand, almost as if the knife knows your intentions before you do. Moreover, it keeps the hide intact, avoiding headaches caused by unwanted holes.

A bad skinner features an overly aggressive tip that punctures organs at the slightest touch, slippery scales that become a liability when blood is involved, and poor edge retention that necessitates awkward sharpening breaks. It may possess a clunky balance that makes it feel more like a garden tool than a precision instrument and hard-to-clean crevices that turn into breeding grounds for bacteria.

In short, an effective skinner collaborates with, rather than works against, you; it's about finesse, not sheer strength, resembling a scalpel instead of a medieval cleaver.

The author indicated the Packout Skinner would make Nessmuk proud. With a MagnaCut stainless steel blade and textured G-10 handle, it sliced through Teriyaki chicken like a champ.

In the field, the Backwoods Skinner excelled at cutting cord with the gut hook that stores in the handle butt and removes via a "grenade pin.

show up, it works hard—just like the hunters it is built for.

A simple knife test I use is rustic meat cooking and slicing. In my eyes, and according to George Washington Sears, aka Nessmuk, an outdoor knife should be able to skin, butcher and slice. The Packout Skinner would make him proud. It does it all. I had a small summer barbecue with Teriyaki chicken and the skinner sliced it like a champ.

The sheath came in scout carry mode, so that's how I used it. It carried comfortably. However, bending forward processing meat and camp must-haves made me remove it for a few minutes. On the plus side, it was easy to remove and attach without having to take it off my belt.

BIGFOOT BLADE

The W.R. Case & Sons Laramy Miller Sasquatch Skinner is a rugged fixed blade fashioned for serious field work. It strikes a balance between reach and control, perfect for skinning game or tackling camp chores. The blade has excellent edge retention and a stealthy, corrosion-resistant surface.

The smooth handle offers a secure, scratch-resistant grip with a soft feel that stays comfortable through prolonged use. The full-tang construction adds durability, while the ergonomic shape keeps your hand locked in when things get messy. A fitted sheath completes the package, offering classic protection and easy belt carry. This knife is built to perform and last.

The rugged Sasquatch Skinner feels like a survival knife meant for hard use and skinning. The first thing I did was make a fire. I feathered a dry birch stick and was impressed with the skinner's edge geometry. I made curls that were thin enough to take a spark via my Uberleben ferro rod and the blade spine. I didn't read any info on the spine having a 90-degree angle. However, it's a hidden gem! The second half of

TOPS KNIVES BACKWOODS SKINNER

DESIGNER: Joshua Swanagon
BLADE LENGTH: 3"
BLADE @THICKEST: .16"
BLADE MATERIAL: 1095 carbon steel
BLADE FINISH: Coyote tan coating
SCALES: Green canvas Micarta®
WEIGHT: 5.4 ozs.
OVERALL LENGTH: 6.75"
SHEATH: Black leather
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: U.S.A.
MSRP: $270

BLADEGALLERY.COM
The Online Source for Fine Custom Knives
BladeGallery.com
BG
Fine Knives
Sole worldwide distributor for Thorburn knives
North American distributor for Takefu SG2 Laminated Steel
L51 Flipper with SG2 Super-Steel by André Thorburn
BLADE CONNECTION
BLADECONNECTION.COM
Practical & Tactical ~ The Best of Every Day Carry
Native by Winkler Knives
Chef's Knife by Bill Burke, M.S.
The Epicurean Edge
The Knife that Makes the Meal ~ Cutlery for the Discerning Chef
EPICEDGE.COM

Material wise, the sheaths are divided: two come in Kydex, two in leather.

the spine—middle to tip—is where it's sharp.

I employed the Sasquatch to split poplar and maple via a baton with no worries. I found the handle a bit thin for gripping during specific crafts. Maybe that's why it's a skinner, not a survival knife.

The edge was sharp and stayed that way. I like the absence of gimping as I don't use it. However, most knife folks would disagree, especially with a skinner. The knife seemed like a ramped-up skinner, slightly on the heavy side, but then think of survivalist/mountain man Laramy Miller—they don't call him Sasquatch for nothing!

The sheath carries traditionally on the belt at a medium height. It's not too much of a rib jabber, nor does it carry too low.

LIGHT & SHARP

The White River Knife & Tool Model 1 Skinner is a target-constructed field knife that blends compact control with premium materials perfectly sized for precision work without sacrificing reach. The blade has excellent edge retention and corrosion resistance for repeated use in harsh conditions. The textured handle provides a secure, ergonomic grip—wet or gloved—while the large choil and gimping enhance control during delicate skinning tasks. A custom-molded sheath ensures safe carry and quick access, whether belt-mounted or pack-ready. Light-

WHITE RIVER KNIFE & TOOL MODEL 1 SKINNER

BLADE LENGTH: 3"
BLADE @THICKEST: .13"
BLADE STEEL: CPM S35VN stainless
ROCKWELL HARDNESS: 58-60 HRC
FINISH: Stonewash
SCALES: Textured orange G-10
WEIGHT: 3.5 ozs.
OVERALL LENGTH: 7"
SHEATH: Kydex
COUNTRY OF origin: U.S.A.
MSRP: $160

CLASSIC DESIGN SIGNS

Classic skinners are all about specific design features as opposed to gimmicks. They typically have a blade with a wide belly and sweeping curve for long, confident strokes that excel at slicing through hide. Most use a drop point or semi-rounded tip to prevent accidental stabbing when dealing with gut sacks. A flat or convex grind offers a good balance between sharpness and strength, while hollow grinds, though sometimes sharper, can be fragile. Blade lengths usually range from 3 to 4 inches for maneuverability in tight areas like hooves or facial contours. Ergonomics is also crucial, with grippy materials like Micarta® or textured rubber preferred to prevent slippage.

The Model 1 serves as an excellent, nimble butcher knife. The author easily deboned and skinned split-chicken breasts using the little gem.

TOPS KNIVES

ONE LIFE ONE KNIFE™

TOPS

101% Made in the USA

Call for a free catalog
Dealer inquiries welcome

208-542-0113

www.topsknives.com

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM
@topsknives

SCAN ME

In ulu mode with the Backwoods Skinner, the author sliced raw carrots effortlessly. The edge geometry works for food and game prepping.

The author easily batonned wood with the Sasquatch for a quick fire.

The Packout Skinner is a compact 7-inch knife with a 3-inch blade designed for precision in the field.

weight and razor sharp, the Model 1 is a reliable companion for hunters who demand performance without bulk.

While there wasn't a running wild game season in my area of the Northeast when I wrote these words, I stuck with simplicity. One bird always in season is chicken. I buy skin-on, bone-in and prefer to do the preparation. The Model 1 makes for an excellent, nimble butcher knife. I used the little gem to debone split-chicken breasts and skinned them with ease. The grip was never in question and the forward spine gimping proved helpful. I used it for about one hour, skinning and deboning with no complaints. The thin grind glided through the meat with ease and the taper is excellent.

ULU INSPIRED

The TOPS Knives Backwoods Skinner is a compact ulu-inspired knife built for precision and endurance. The deep-bellied blade is perfect for slicing through hide and tackling bushcraft tasks without flinching.

The handle features an ovulated grip and deep choil, offering fatigue-free control and a confident hold even in messy conditions. Hidden in the pommel is a clever gut hook, deployable when needed and safely tucked away when not. A sheath combining classic style with belt-loop-carry convenience augment the package. Designed by survival authority Joshua Swanagon, the knife is ready for big game, small game and everything in between.

The gut hook nestled in the handle is excellent for hunting season. I used it as a cord cutter. The sharp hook is a standard fixture for search-and-rescue personnel to slice cord and rope and to free people from entanglements. Remove the grenade pin and carefully take out the gut hook. Reverse the hook and install it in the proper hole for security. Make sure to put the sheath on to prevent cuts. My gut hook took some working in with another object until it fit. I suggest using leather gloves to avoid cuts from the hook.

I remember a video with designer Joshua Swanagon talking about the ulu-shaped blade. I saw the ulu pattern immediately when I first saw the knife. Luckily for me, carrots were in season. I used the Backwoods Skinner as I would an ulu, slicing and dicing. Carrots are more difficult to cut due to their hardness. A dull or too thickly beveled blade will wedge and split the vegetable. However, there was none of that. I used my forefinger on the drop portion of the blade tip as intended for controlled slices. I also used it like a regular kitchen knife, choking up in a chef's pinch grip. Both worked perfectly fine and were comfortable.

MONTANA KNIFE CO. PACKOUT SKINNER

BLADE LENGTH: 3"
BLADE @THICKEST: .11"
BLADE STEEL: MagnaCut stainless
BLADE FINISH: Stonewash
SCALES: G-10
WEIGHT: 2.98 ozs.
OVERALL LENGTH: 7"
SHEATH: Kydex
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: U.S.A.
MSRP: $300

For the contact information for the knives in the story, see "Where To Get 'Em" on page 45.

For the latest knives, knife news, trends, and more, visit ***blademag.com,*** BLADE®*'s popular Instagram page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***Twitter****.*

BLADE

NEED A KNIFE? JUST VISIT

SMOKY MOUNTAIN KNIFE WORKS

ONLINE STORE RIGHT NOW!

ORDER AT SMKW.COM OR CALL 865-453-5871

SCAN CODE FOR ALL SMKW EXCLUSIVES!

TikTok

CHECK OUT THE LATEST SMKW EXCLUSIVES!

SMOKY MOUNTAIN KNIFE WORKS IS THE WORLD'S LARGEST KNIFE STORE.

IF IT CUTS, WE CARRY IT.

DAILY FLASH SALES • AUTOMATIC KNIVES • CUSTOM SHOP

SMKW

SMKW.COM

FALL IN!

Avail yourself of some sharp, hot knives for hunting season

>> SPEC CHART

KNIFE NAME: Bear Creek Hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 6"
BLADE MATERIAL: 1095 carbon steel
BLADE GRIND: Convex
SCALES: Sambar stag
SPACERS: OD green canvas Micarta® and vintage tan, red and black fiber
POMMEL: Aluminum
GUARD: Soldered brass
OVERALL LENGTH: 10.5"
SHEATH: Leather belt model w/ snap strap
MAKER'S PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE AND SHEATH: $495
MAKER: Rocco Handmade, c/o Brian Nawrocki, Allenton, Michigan 586-531-5279 roccohandmade33@gmail.com (SharpByCoop image)

SPEC CHART <<

KNIFE NAME: Antler Hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 4"
BLADE STEEL: S35VN stainless
BLADE GRIND: Flat
SCALES: Sambar stag
GUARD: 416 stainless
OVERALL LENGTH: 9.25"
KNIFE TO KNOW: The stag is from the customer's first deer kill; Rod Harris is a member of the Australian Knifemakers Guild
MAKER'S PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE: $650 at press-time exchange rate
KNIFE TO KNOW: The Antler Hunter is the first time Rod Harris has both had one of his knives published and made a knife with a stag handle
MAKER: Rod Harris 0428 404843 harrisknives@hotmail.com (Rod Hoare image)

>> SPEC CHART

KNIFE NAME: Huntin Buddy
KNIFE TYPE: Hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 3.5"
BLADE MATERIAL: Bulldog damascus *san-mai*
BLADE GRIND: Flat
SCALES: Bead-blasted ironwood
OVERALL LENGTH: 7.5"
SHEATH: Belt model, tooled black leather
MAKER'S PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE: $400
MAKER: Eland Green, Gainesville, Texas 940-736-9015 lwknives@yahoo.com, lostwoodknives.com (Jocelyn Frasier image)

SPEC CHART <<

KNIFE NAME: Integral XL Hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 5.5"
BLADE MATERIAL: Ghost-Fire Damascus of 1084 carbon and 15N20 nickel-alloy steels
BLADE GRIND: Convex
SCALES: Black G-10
OVERALL LENGTH: 10.5"
MAKER'S PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE: $2,500
MAKER: Zane Dvorak, Wakeman, Ohio 419-577-3146 zdblacksmithing@gmail.com, zdforge.com (Jocelyn Frasier image)

>> SPEC CHART

MODEL: Dress Hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 3.75"
BLADE MATERIAL: A twist W's damascus of 1084 carbon and 15N20 nickel-alloy steels
BLADE GRIND: Flat w/convex edge
SCALES: Heirloom-fit camel bone
HANDLE FRAME: 1065 carbon steel w/ matte blue finish
GUARD: Same material as frame
OVERALL LENGTH: 7.75"
MAKER'S PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE: Check w/maker for more info
KNIFE TO KNOW: Best Hunter Award Winner, 2025 Australian Knifemakers Guild Melbourne Knife Show; inspired by the classic Jerry Fisk Sendero hunter; Shawn McIntyre is an ABS master smith
MAKER: Shawn McIntyre, Dept. BL11, 20 Glen Morgan St., Brunswick East, Victoria 3057 Australia 0412 041062 mcintyreknives@gmail.com (Rod Hoare image)

SPEC CHART <<

KNIFE NAME: Clifft Bowie
BLADE LENGTH: 7"
BLADE MATERIAL: 125Cr1 carbon steel
BLADE @THE THICKEST: .25"
BLADE PATTERN: Clip point (also comes in a harpoon point)
CONSTRUCTION: Hidden tang
SCALES: Natural canvas Micarta® (also in black G-10)
OVERALL LENGTH: 13"
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: USA
SHEATH: Leather w/retention strap; ambidextrous carry; by Chattanooga Leather Works
KNIFE TO KNOW: Won Best American-Made Knife at BLADE Show Texas 2025
MSRP: $575
COMPANY: Dauntless, dauntlessmanufacturing.com (SharpByCoop image)

>> SPEC CHART

MODEL: Hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 5.75"
BLADE MATERIAL: *Cu-mai*
BLADE GRIND: Flat
SCALES: Ironwood
GUARD: Hot blued
OVERALL LENGTH: 10.5"
KNIFE TO KNOW: Charlie Lloyd is an ABS journeyman smith
MAKER'S PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE: $750
MAKER: Charlie Lloyd, Chiefland, Florida, lloydcharles88@gmail.com (SharpByCoop image)

SPEC CHART <<

KNIFE TYPE: Hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 4.5"
BLADE MATERIAL: W's multi-bar (6 bars) damascus of O2 carbon and 15N20 nickel-alloy steels
BLADE GRIND: Flat w/convex edge
SCALES: Curly gidgee
GUARD: 304 stainless steel
OVERALL LENGTH: 9.25"
MAKER'S PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE: $1,300
KNIFE TO KNOW: Camille Sennegon is a journeyman smith in the ABS
MAKER: Camille Sennegon, Silver Spring, Maryland, Camille.sennegon@gmail.com (SharpByCoop image)

>> SPEC CHART

MODEL: #187
KNIFE TYPE: Hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 4.1"
BLADE STEEL: 14C28 stainless
BLADE THICKNESS @RICASSO: .118"
BLADE GRIND: Flat
BLADE PATTERN: Drop point
SCALES: A Western Australia desert hardwood called Minniritchie
LINERS: G-10
OVERALL LENGTH: 8.85"
SHEATH: Leather belt model
MAKER'S PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE AND SHEATH: $300-$400 at press-time exchange rate
MAKER: Jak Knives, c/o Rick Kemp, Dept. BL11, 5 Bourdman Pl., Spalding, Western Australia 6530 Australia 0488-196-952 rickkemp@hotmail.com (Rod Hoare image)

SPEC CHART <<

KNIFE NAME: Varis
BLADE LENGTH: 3.9"
BLADE STEEL: Nitro V stainless
BLADE GRIND: Flat
BLADE THICKNESS @RICASSO: .157"
SCALES: G-10
OVERALL LENGTH: 8.66"
SHEATH: Synthetic
KNIFE TO KNOW: Varis won the Best Hunting Knife Award at the 2025 Queensland Knife Show; Dominic Binker is a member of the Australian Knifemakers Guild
MAKER: DB Blades, c/o Dominic Binkert, Dept. BL11, 5/26 Burgess Rd., Baywater Roads, Victoria 3153 Australia 0411 025 776 Instagram @ db__blades (Rod Hoare image)

>> SPEC CHART

KNIFE NAME: M.O.A.
KNIFE TYPE: Hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 2.75"
BLADE MATERIAL: Cruwear carbon steel
BLADE GRIND: Full flat
HANDLE MATERIAL: Burgundy linen Micarta®, Fordite and silver metallic carbon fiber
OVERALL LENGTH: 6.75"
MAKER'S PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE: $375
MAKER: Under The Bridge Knife and Tool, c/o Anthony Stratton, Raymore, Missouri 816-304-0609 ta2tony21@gmail.com (SharpByCoop image)

SPEC CHART <<

MODEL: Slug Life
KNIFE TYPE: Hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 3.54"
BLADE MATERIAL: Mosaic damascus of 1084 carbon and 15N20 nickel-alloy steels
BLADE GRIND: Full flat
SCALES: Ringed gidgee
PINS: Carbon fiber
KNIFE TO KNOW: Tapered tang; Slug Life won the Best Hunter Award at the 2025 Perth Knife Show; Peter Cocks is a member of the Australian Knifemakers Guild
SHEATH: Belt model of Australian leather bearing Peter's leather texturing stamp and finished w/a Barry King border stamp
MAKER'S PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE AND SHEATH: $750 at press-time exchange rate
MAKER: Pcocks Customs, c/o Peter Cocks, Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, Australia pcockscustoms@gmail.com (Rod Hoare image)

For the latest knives, knife news, trends and more, visit ***blademag.com****,* BLADE®*'s popular* ***Instagram*** *page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***X (Twitter)****.*

BLADE

JANTZ

1-800-351-8900 knifemaking.com

Liberty Wood

Our NEW dyed laminated wood handle material. 3/8" x 1-1/2" x 10" size of scale. More colors and slabs are available online.

CAT#	COLOR	PRICE
LW101	Walnut	$12.95
LW109	Silver Black	$12.95
LW181	Olivewood	$12.95
LW112	Indigo Blue	$12.95
LW114	Cocobolo	$12.95
LW120	Emerald Green	$12.95
LW131	Passionwood	$12.95
LW125	Rosewood Burgandy	$12.95
LW127	Lemonwood	$12.95
LW132	Fuschia	$12.95
LW128	Charcoal Ruby	$12.95
LW130	Hawkeye	$12.95
LW183	Cherry Tree	$12.95

Protective Cases

Durable protective cases, featuring black Cordura exterior and soft fabric interior with black poly foam padding and a nylon zipper.

CAT.#	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
R6N	Folder 2 1/2" x 6"	$10.95
R7N	Folder 2 1/2" x 8"	$10.95
R10N	Hunter 3" x 10"	$10.95
R13N	Fighter 4" x 13"	$11.95

Liner Material

Knifemaker: Bidinger Knives

G10 Liners

5" x 10" G10 Liner Material. Specify thickness & color when ordering. Available in three thicknesses,

1/64" - $8.19 Each
1/32" - $11.95 Each
1/16" - $13.95 Each.

Vulcanized Fiber

Set of 10 - One of each color
#MI995 - $15.50

G-10 Rods

G-10 rods used for pinning handles. All are in 12" lengths. Also available in 1/8" and 3/16" diameters.

CAT#	COLOR	SIZE	PRICE
MI24411	Blue	1/4"	$7.95
MI24071	Lime Green	1/4"	$7.95
MI24211	Red	1/4"	$7.95
MI24311	Orange	1/4"	$7.95
MI24511	White	1/4"	$7.95
MI24811	Black	1/4"	$7.95
MI24911	Ivory	1/4"	$7.95
MI24611	Maroon	1/4"	$7.95
MI24711	Purple	1/4"	$7.95

Black Mamba Spring Assist Liner Lock

Folder kit , overall 7 1/4" open, 4 1/4" closed, blade 3" long, 1" wide, and 1/16" thick.

CAT.#	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
SS1557	with Black G10	29.95

Caballero EDC

Folder kit, overall 7 1/4" open, 4 1/4" closed, blade is 3" long, 1" wide, and 1/16" thick.

CAT.#	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
SS674	Caballero Kit	29.95

Python Crossbar Lock

Folder kit, overall 7 1/4" open, 4 1/4" closed, blade is 3" long, 1" wide, and 1/16" thick.

CAT.#	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
SS156601	with Black G10	39.95
SS156642	with Olive G10	39.95
SS156610	with Red G10	39.95

Honey Badger Flipper Liner Lock

Folder kit, overall 7 1/4" open, 4 1/4" closed, blade is 3" long, 1" wide, and 1/16" thick.

CAT.#	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
SS187601	with Black G10	39.95
SS187642	with Olive G10	39.95
SS187610	with Red G10	39.95

AEB-L Stainless Steel

Combines hardness with sharp edge retention and excellent wear resistance. AEB-L is cold rolled for optimal working as it is in the soft state. NOTE - AEB-L is cut in house from sheets. Cold-rolled steel will "spring" and may have a slight warp to it upon receipt.

Typical chemistry: C 0.67, Mn 0.60, Si 0.40, Cr 13.00, P 0.025, S 0.015.

CAT#	SIZE	LENGTH	PRICE
AE0815	1/8" x 1 1/2"	18"	$17.07
AE0820	1/8" x 2"	18"	$30.12
AE1015	5/32" x 1 1/2"	18"	$21.68
AE1020	5/32" x 2"	18"	$42.32

14C28N Steel

Sandvik 14C28N® is a martensitic stainless chromium steel with an optimized chemistry providing a top grade knife steel with a unique combination of excellent edge performance, high hardness and good corrosion resistance. Aim hardness of 55-62 HRC. Also available in 36".

Typical chemistry: C 0.62, Mn 0.60, Si 0.20, Cr 14.00, P 0.025, S 0.010, N 0.11.

CAT#	SIZE	LENGTH	PRICE
RY1515	1.5mm x 1 1/2"	18"	$18.07
RY2015	2mm x 1 1/2"	18"	$22.75
RY2515	2.5mm x 1 1/2"	18"	$24.86
RY3015	3mm x 1 1/2"	18"	$29.82
RY3020	3mm x 2"	18"	$39.76
RY3515	3.5mm x 1 1/2"	18"	$31.10
RY3520	3.5mm x 2"	18"	$41.47
RY4015	4mm x 1 1/2"	18"	$35.55
RY4020	4mm x 2"	18"	$47.41
RY4520	4.5mm x 2"	18"	$53.31

Multi-Power LED Head Magnifier

Lens magnification can combine to increase magnification up to 3.8x. Loupe magnification: 4.5x. LED Bulbs. Adjustable Head Strap.

CAT.#	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
SH1067	Illuminated Magnifer	$19.95

Hardened File Guide

Precision machined from A-2 tool steel and hardened to 62RHC. Overall 3.250", maximum blade width 2", each jaw is 3/8" x 3/4". Made in USA.

CAT.#	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
FG101	Hardened File Guide	$59.95

Knifemakers Center Scribe

Scribing center lines for grinding knife blades. Can be adjusted from 0-1/2" with 1/32" per revolution using the fine adjustment screw. Uses a Carbide tip. Made in USA.

CAT.#	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
JS305	Center Scribe	$39.95
JS307	Replace Carbide Tip	$9.95

80CrV2 Steel

The high carbon, chrome-vanadium chemical composition makes 80CrV2 a good steel for knives. Machines easy, has great edge retention, wear resisitance, and toughness. Aim Hardness 57. Also available in 36". **Chemistry:C .85, Cr .60, Mn .50, Si .30, Ni .40, Mo .10, P .025, S .020**

CAT#	SIZE	LENGTH	PRICE
CZ0615	3/32" x 1 1/2"	18"	$9.47
CZ0620	3/32" x 2"	18"	$12.63
CZ0815	1/8" x 1 1/2"	18"	$12.63
CZ0820	1/8" x 2"	18"	$16.85
CZ1015	5/32" x 1 1/2"	18"	$15.87
CZ1020	5/32" x 2"	18"	$21.16
CZ1215	3/16" x 1 1/2"	18"	$19.00
CZ1220	3/16" x 2"	18"	$25.34
CZ1615	1/4" x 1 1/2"	18"	$25.27
CZ1620	1/4" x 2"	18"	$33.69

15N20

With a 2% high nickel content, 15N20 is the layer of steel that produces the bright contrast for making Damascus. **Typical chemistry:C .75, Mn .40, Si .30, Ni 2.00, P max .020, S max .010**

CAT#	SIZE	LENGTH	PRICE
XN152	.049" x 1 1/2"	12"	$9.13
XN252	.049" x 2"	12"	$12.17
XN196	.095" x 1 1/2"	36"	$39.28
XN296	.095" x 2"	36"	$52.38

Knife Sharpening Wheel Set

Used by professionals, this two 7.5" wheel system allows the user to grind a fine edge then clean & polish to a sharp edge.

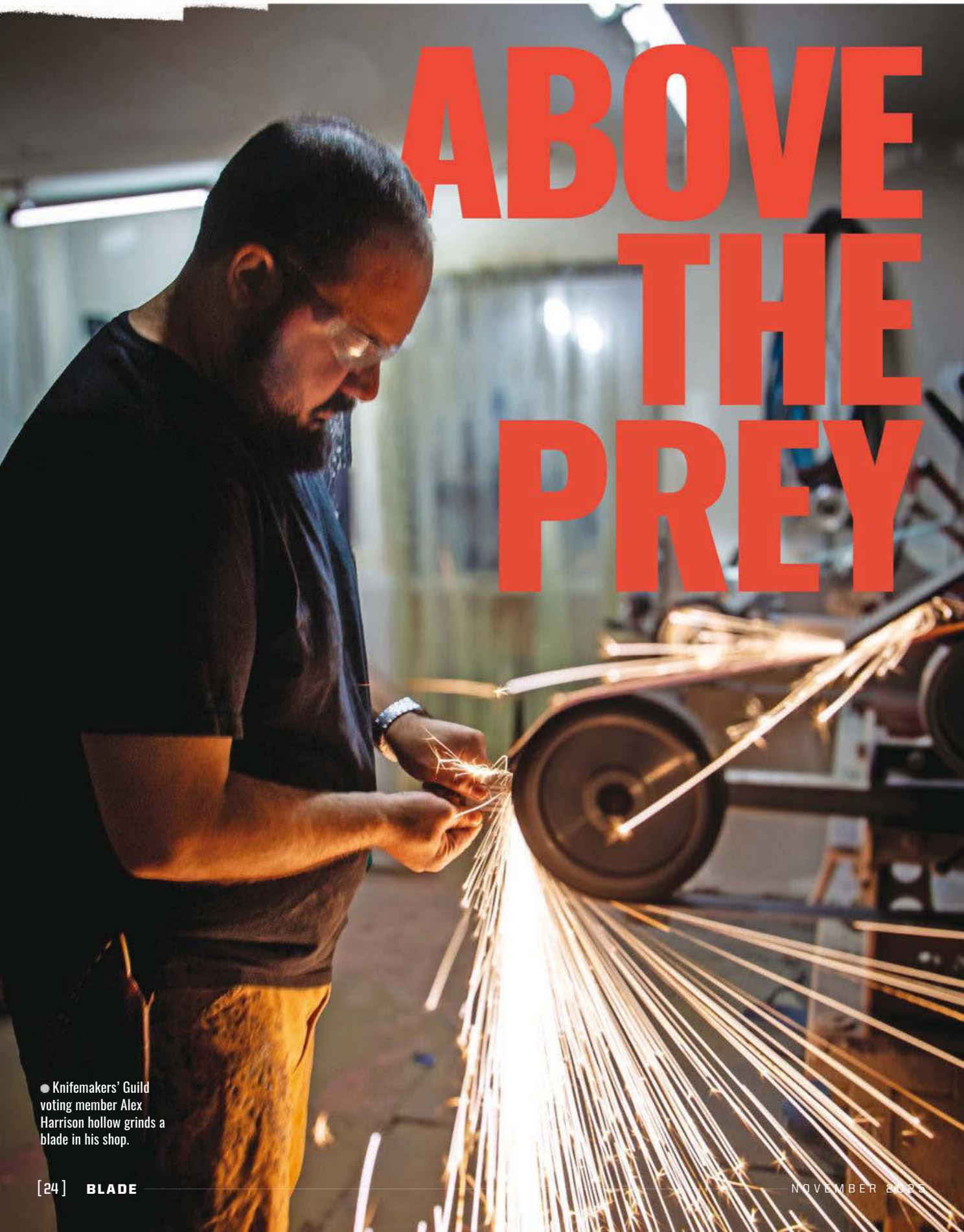
CAT.#	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
WKS750	Sharpening Wheels	$34.95

G5 EPOXY is a fast curing epoxy for quick repairs, tooling and general bonding. 3-5 min. curing. **G-FLEX EPOXY** is a toughened, resilient two-part epoxy engineered for superior grip. G-Flex absorbs the stresses of expansion, contraction, shock and vibration. Cures in 7-10 hrs. **G-FLEX SYRINGE** same G-Flex epoxy in a convenient syringe.

CAT.#	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
WE8654	G5 Five Minute 8oz	$31.39
WE6508	G-Flex Liquid 8oz	$33.19
WE6551	G-Flex Syringe .84oz	$22.95

BY **JASON FRY**

ABOVE THE PREY



● Knifemakers' Guild voting member Alex Harrison hollow grinds a blade in his shop.

Proper blade grinds and edge geometry drive top hunting knives

Whether it's a secret lure, special scent, backwoods honey hole, a custom-tuned call, or even camo boxers or lucky socks, all hunters have some kind of secret weapon, superstition or technique that they believe will give them an edge over their quarry. But when it comes to the actual edge—the blade of your knife—are you that particular? Are you that picky, that much caught up in hype or that much committed to tradition? Let's explore the "hunter's edge" as we consider what kind of grind and edge geometry makes a so-called perfect hunting knife.

Hunting is a game of tradeoffs. If you hunt the field, you can't hunt the hill. You may be stuck at work on the nice weather days and sitting in the trees in the rain on Saturday. You may sit one time and kill a record buck, or you may sit all season and not see a single "shooter." There's seldom a way you can have it all at the same time.

The hunter's knife is no different. In general, "small game, small knife, large game, large knife" holds true, but what characteristics make it so? A big knife can be an advantage or a small knife can be sufficient, depending on whether you're hunting whitetails in Saskatchewan or Texas. Do you want to use the same knife for wild pigs and moose?

Hunters want a knife that will stay with them through thick and thin. But should the knife's edge be thick or thin? I have hunted and harvested game since I was a boy, but it was not until I was nearly 40 that I put a caliper to a knife edge. A knife just *was*, an omnipresent tool taken for granted. Some worked better than others, though I had never thought about why it was that way. Let's talk a little about edge thickness and numbers.

Sojourn by Alex Harrison of Night Watch Knives features a blade of CPM 154 stainless in a blackened War Wash finish. The handle is textured, blasted G-10 with black liners and hollow pins. Guard: nickel. Construction: tapered tang. Overall length: 8 inches. Blade grind: hollow. Edge thickness: .010 inch. Alex said the ligature notch is meant to be a safe way to conduct an aggressive gross motor skills reverse cut and sever a ligature under tension. His price for a similar knife: $500.

THE OPTIMAL EDGE

An experienced hunter may want a knife to chop trails and trim brush, do camp chores or fire-building tasks, or split a deer's pelvis or sternum. Those tasks lend themselves to a larger, heavier knife with a thicker edge. The heavy-use knife may be 10 or 11 inches overall of 3/16-inch-thick steel and maybe forty thousandths (.040) of an inch or more behind the edge. The grind is more likely to be full flat with a convex edge, or even full convex. The tradeoff is no matter how sharp such a knife gets, it won't excel at fine work like making the initial cuts through fur or opening the abdomen. It's not impossible to field dress a deer with a thick-edged knife, it's just a bit more difficult.

Another hunter of equal skill may carry his knife on his belt or in her pack, only taking it out for the finer tasks of skinning, quartering and deboning. Such a knife could be as little as 3/32 inch thick and as short as 7.5 inches overall. The grind could be full flat or hollow, and somewhere in the 15-to-20 thousandths (.015-to-.020)-of-an-inch-thick-range, or even thinner. On a small knife, you may not have the handle or blade length to give you the leverage you want to easily split the sternum on an elk. No matter how sharp the small knife is, it won't excel at chopping or tasks that require leverage. It's presumably not impossible to field dress a grizzly

"OF ALL THE KNIVES IN THE JUDGING, THIS ONE REALLY SPOKE TO ME AS AN EXCELLENT HUNTING KNIFE."

Knives the author has designed and/or made over the years, from left: his Jason Fry Hunter for White River Knife & Tool; his first real forged knife; the 100th knife he ever made, circa 2010; the 50th knife he ever made; and his first-ever knife, the Deer Disassembly Device, aka Triple D. For the knives' grinds, edge thicknesses and other specs, see the story.

bear with a small, thin knife, it's just a bit more difficult at some points in the process.

My "eyecrometer" doesn't measure very precisely. As a simple frame of reference, 10 pages of *BLADE*® are roughly .020-inch thick. If you use a caliper, you'll need one that measures down to the .001 (thousandths)-of-an-inch level.

Well, that was a nice theoretical discussion. Now let's look at some concrete examples.

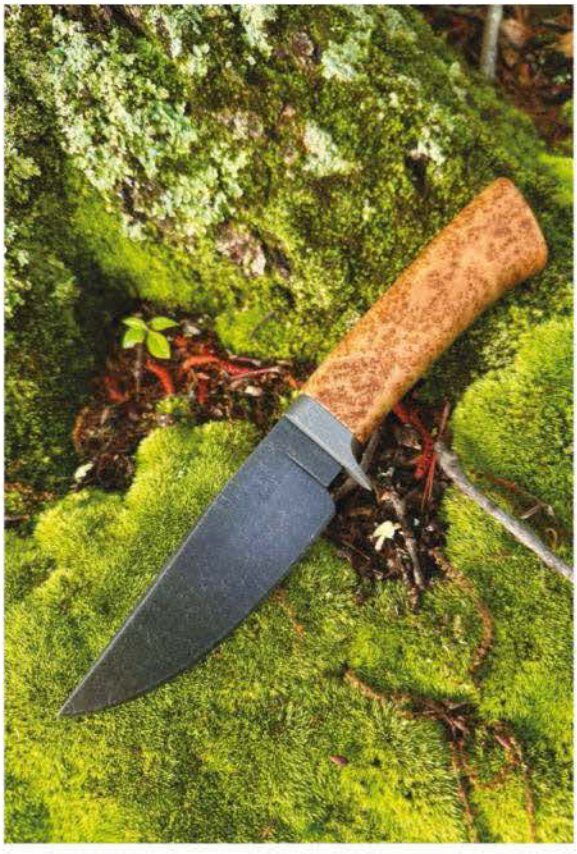
DIFFERENT TAKES

I asked a group of knifemakers to send me examples of knives that fit the hunting knife description. I was part of the judging panel for the Knifemakers' Guild awards at the BLADE Show and got the chance to handle a wonderful knife from Guild voting member Alex Harrison of Night Watch Knives. Of all the knives in the judging, this one really spoke to me as an excellent hunting knife.

First, there are the intentionally muted textures and tones. It's all dark, rough and tough, and even the bright orange G-10 has subtlety from the combination of the ground-in divots and blasted grain of the material. Next, the shape was pleasant in the hand and the blade was all business. At first glance it's a fairly standard drop point but it has all the small details: the short-serrated section near the ricasso, the swedged point, the ground edge at the top of the point. Underneath it all, the hollow grinds are simultaneously effective and pleasing to the eye.

"This knife is hollow ground, probably 'ten thou' behind the edge. That's the sweet spot for me," Alex explained. "Everyone loves a razor blade but people do stupid [stuff] with their knives, and even skilled users aren't always gentle. I often have requests for serrations for game processing, so I taught myself how to grind them in such a way that they still slice paper." I dare you to try to slice paper with the serrations on the standard big-box store

"IT'S NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO FIELD DRESS A DEER WITH A THICK-EDGED KNIFE, IT'S JUST A BIT MORE DIFFICULT."



A 4-inch blade of 8670 carbon steel in a stonewashed finish and a maple burl handle help complete the Wagu Cattleman by Guild probationary member Chip Carlisle of Skjeggmenn Knives. Handle: maple burl. Overall length: 9.5 inches. Blade grind: full-height flat. Edge thickness: .020 inch. His price for a similar knife: $400.

KNIFEMAKING STARTS AT JANTZ

800-351-8900 knifemaking.com

Carbon Fiber and G10 Layered

CAT#	COLOR	SIZE	PRICE
UXC438	Blue	1/8" x 1-1/2" x 10" Scale	$17.95
UXC433	Blue	3/16" x 1-1/2" x 10" Scale	$31.95
UXC9138	Red	1/8" x 1-1/2" x 10" Scale	$17.95
UXC9136	Red	3/16" x 1-1/2" x 10" Scale	$31.95
UXC038	Yellow	1/8" x 1-1/2" x 10" Scale	$17.95
UXC036	Yellow	3/16" x 1-1/2" x 10" Scale	$31.95
UXC338	Orange	1/8" x 1-1/2" x 10" Scale	$17.95
UXC336	Orange	3/16" x 1-1/2" x 10" Scale	$31.95
UXC418	Blue	1/8" x 5" x 10" Slab	$51.95
UXC416	Blue	3/16" x 5" x 10" Slab	$91.95
UXC9118	Red	1/8" x 5" x 10" Slab	$51.95
UXC9116	Red	3/16" x 5" x 10" Slab	$91.95
UXC018	Yellow	1/8" x 5" x 10" Slab	$51.95
UXC016	Yellow	3/16" x 5" x 10" Slab	$91.95
UXC318	Orange	1/8" x 5" x 10" Slab	$51.95
UXC316	Orange	3/16" x 5" x 10" Slab	$91.95

JANTZ PDJ Knife Vise

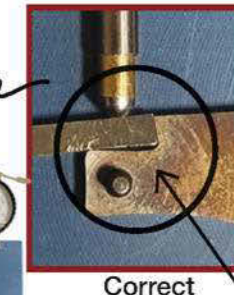
Instructional Video

CAT.#	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
JS750	Jantz PDJ Knife Vise	$79.95

Drill perfect holes every time with the ***JANTZ*** Perpendicular Drill Jig (PDJ) Knife Vise. Allows tang or liner to be face up and perpendicular with drill press. Especially useful when drilling textured, uneven handle material. Can also be used to clamp handle to knife while gluing. Made in USA.

JANTZ Rise and Fall Fixture

CAT.#	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
JS725	Rise & Fall Fixture	129.95



Correct Placement

A great starter fixture for fitting slip joint knives with confidence and precision. Set all 3 planes consistently for only minor adjustments under load. Duplicate the same design over and over with ease. Upgrade to the Kennedy Slip Joint fixture for advanced slip joint knives. Learn more online at knifemaking.com. Made in USA.

JANTZ Fillets MADE IN USA

Overall length 9", Blade Length 4-1/2", Blade Width 1/2", Thickness 5/64". Handle Holes 1/8". Shown above with Orange Ultrex G10 & 1/8" MP825 Spaniel mosaic pin.

Overall length 11-1/2", Blade Length 6-1/4", Blade Width 3/4", Thickness 5/64". Handle Holes 1/4". Shown above with Red Ultrex G10 & 1/4" MP475 Starfish mosaic pin.

Overall length 11", Blade Length 6", Blade Width 1", Thickness 5/64". Handle Holes 1/4". Shown above with Black Ultrex G10 & 1/4" MP495 Ring of Fire mosaic pin.

CAT.#	DESC	STEEL	PRICE
J1703	Trout Fillet	14C28N	26.95
J1705	Straight Fillet	14C28N	29.95
J1706	Curved Fillet	14C28N	29.95

JANTZ knifemaking.com

Metal Powders

325 mesh metal powders of 1084, 1095 or 1080 with a 2% pure nickel or 4% pure nickel mix for making canister damascus.

Larger sizes also available.

CAT#	METAL	SIZE	PRICE
PS845	1084	5 lbs	$38.95
PS955	1095	5 lbs	$38.95
PS802	1080 w/2% Ni	5 lbs	$41.95
PS804	1080 w/4% Ni	5 lbs	$45.95

Handle Material

SO Much More Handle Material Available Online

1/4" x 12" Mosaic Pins

#MP485 #MP405 #MP400 #MP440

CAT.#	DESCRIPTION	SALE PRICE
MP485	Silver Star	$46.95
MP405	Circle Of Light	$46.95
MP400	Pandora's Box	$45.95
MP440	Meteorite	$45.95

6mm x 4" Mosaic Pins

#MQ1312 #MQ0411 #MQ0210 #MQ0550

Many more available online.

CAT.#	DESCRIPTION	SALE PRICE
MQ1312	Red/Cross	$12.95
MQ0411	Blue/Tree of Life	$19.95
MQ0210	Black/Deer Trophy	$14.95
MQ0550	Black/Puniser	$19.95

hunter! Added Alex, "The ligature notch is meant to be a safe way to conduct an aggressive gross motor skills reverse cut and sever a ligature under tension."

Guild probationary member Chip Carlisle's take on a hunter is a bit bigger, a bit beefier and a bit more traditional. The Wagu Cattleman from Chip's Skjeggmenn Knives is 9.5 inches overall with a 4-inch blade of 3/16-inch-thick stonewashed 8670 carbon steel. A precise, full-height flat grind comes to a thin .020-inch edge. The clip point is swedged, giving the blade a sleeker look than its height would automatically provide. Carlisle said the knife "delivers uncompromising performance where it matters most—at the edge of work and wilderness."

Newly elected Guild board member Paul LeBatard executes the traditional hunter with modern materials and an eye for precision. The 3.5-inch blade of his Field and Stream model is 3/32-inch stock hollow ground on a 12-inch wheel to an edge thickness of .020 inch. Overall length: 7.75 inches. The same design comes in two larger sizes called the Personal and Personal Plus. The profile reminds me of the old Case and Western hunters from years past.

UNSPOKEN RULE

One of the unspoken rules of the knifemaking world is to not offer unsolicited criticism of another maker's work. Now that I've put that rule in writing, I'll be consistent and point out some flaws in some of my own early work to illustrate some points of error to look for. At far right in the accompanying image (page 26) of my five knives is the first knife I ever made, stock removal from a file, that I enthusiastically called the Triple D for Deer Disassembly Device. I was a bit delusional. Although I've processed many deer with this knife, the handle is too short for the blade, which causes problems with leverage while splitting the sternum. Also, the knife was made with files and sandpaper, not a grinder. The original edge thickness was somewhere beyond .060 inch. Eventually, as my skills improved, I re-ground the knife a bit, pushing the edge back to a slightly more respectable .035 inch. The knife doesn't slice well at all, mostly as a function of the thick geometry, but also of the shorter bevel grinds on thicker stock.

If you use a caliper, you'll need one that measures down to the thousandths-of-an-inch level.

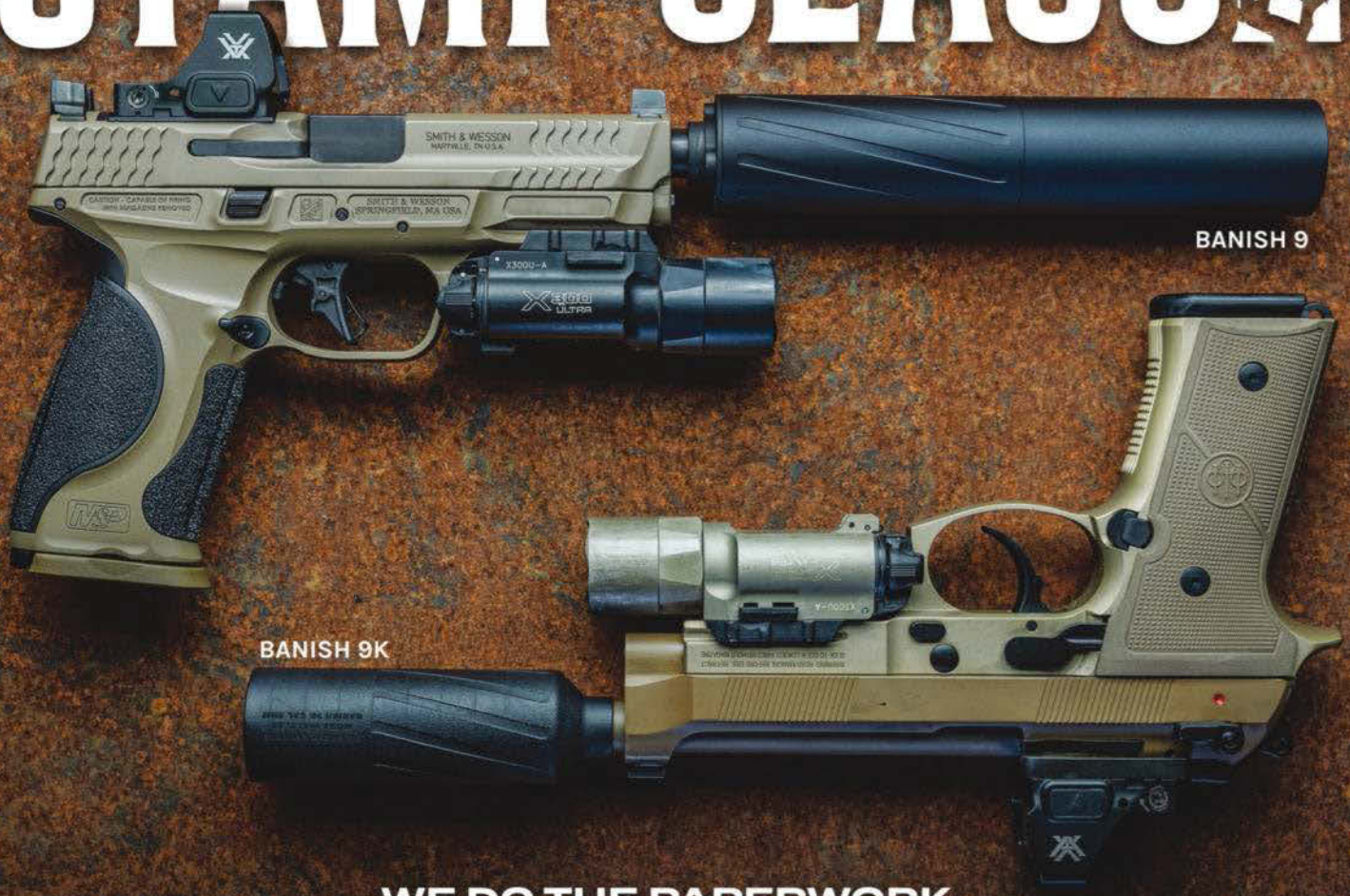
Field and Stream by newly elected Knifemakers' Guild board member Paul LeBatard boasts a 3.5-inch blade of CPM 154 stainless and jigged bone scales. Overall length: 7.75 inches. Blade grind: hollow. Edge thickness: .020 inch. His price for a similar knife: $400. (Jocelyn Frasier image)

"THIS KNIFE IS HOLLOW GROUND, PROBABLY 'TEN THOU' BEHIND THE EDGE. THAT'S THE SWEET SPOT FOR ME."—ALEX HARRISON

SILENCER CENTRAL

TO LEARN MORE CALL 888.781.8778
OR VISIT SILENCERCENTRAL.COM

STAMP SEASON



WE DO THE PAPERWORK.
WE PAY YOUR TAX STAMP.
WE DELIVER TO YOUR DOOR.

USE CODE STAMP

YOU'VE GOT YOUR TAGS.
WE'VE GOT YOUR STAMPS.

DISCLAIMER: *Offer valid on qualifying suppressors as noted on www.silencercentral.com/tax-stamp-promo/. Promotion starts on 10.1.2025 at 12:01 AM CST. Cannot be combined with other offers, exchanged, refunded, transferred, returned, or redeemed for cash. Valid on new purchases only. Must be age 21+ and a resident of a silencer-legal state.

All hunters have some kind of secret weapon, superstition or technique they believe will give them an edge over their quarry.

Chip Carlisle applies a flat blade grind using his belt grinder.

The author's Four Roses sports a 3-inch blade of Nitro V stainless and scales from a Four Roses whiskey barrel. Construction: tapered tang. Overall length: 7.75 inches. Blade grind: flat. Edge thickness: .020. His price for a similar knife: $350.

Next from right in the image is my 50th knife, stock removal, ⅛-inch-thick 1084 carbon steel. This one also has handled its share of game. The edge thickness is .025 inch and works great but the handle is too thin. With ⅛-inch-thick steel and ⅛-inch-thick G-10 scales, there's just not enough handle for my aging hands. The center knife is my 100th circa 2010. I was into D2 and filework at the time, neither of which are particularly suited for a hunter, and the handle is fat and boxy. Next is my first real forged knife, from a drag harrow tooth from my grandfather's ranch. The handle is 1955 white oak floorboards from my house at the time. The knife is the best of those pictured in many ways, with a thin edge at .010 inch, a large enough handle, easily sharpenable steel, and a great story of how the original customer gave the knife back to me before he passed away. The full flat grind and distal taper make it a pleasure to use.

At far left in the picture is what I've settled on as my hunting knife of choice, the Jason Fry Hunter I designed for White River Knife & Tool in a full-flat-bevel-ground blade of S35VN stainless and black/orange G-10 scales. It's just shy of 8 inches overall with a 3.5-inch blade. The handle length is enough to provide the necessary leverage, and the blade length is enough to do the cutting. I've made this design for a decade by hand, both one-offs and small batches. For a general-use hunting knife for mass production, I wanted to split the difference between thin razor and beefy chopper. I specified the thickness at .020 inch and the White River guys nailed it.

WHAT MAKES IT?

What makes the perfect hunting knife edge? It must be sharp. It has to be thin enough to slice fur yet burly enough to split a pelvis or sternum. It must have a handle big enough to provide leverage. It has to hold an edge through its primary tasks. Most of all, it must be with you when you hunt, an integral part of the package of secret weapons that set the hunter above the prey.

For the contact information for the knives in the story, see "Where To Get 'Em" on page 45.

For the latest knives, knife news, trends, and more, visit ***blademag.com,*** BLADE®*'s popular Instagram page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***X (Twitter)****.*

BLADE

100% EMPLOYEE OWNED | 100% MANUFACTURED IN THE USA

NIAGARA
SPECIALTY METALS

12600 CLARENCE CENTER ROAD | AKRON, NY 14001 | (800) 424-0048 | NSM-NY.COM

Utah AWESOME

Come meet the legends of knifemaking at BLADE Show West

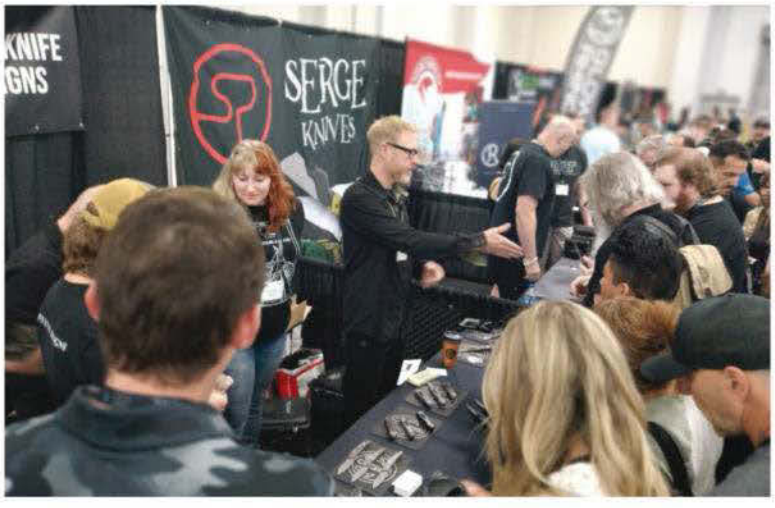
Legendary first timers, some of the world's best custom and factory knifemakers and their knives, the annual West Coast Flipping Championships and much more await you at BLADE Show West Oct. 10-11 in the Salt Palace Convention Center in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Making its BLADE Show West debut* will be Leatherman Tool, the legendary multi-tool maker based in Portland, Oregon. Another cutlery household name exhibiting at the show for the first time, this time on the custom side, will be BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-of-Fame® member Jim Sornberger.

Other top custom makers set to exhibit are such South Texas Slipjoint Cartel members as Cutlery Hall-of-Famer Bill Ruple and award-winning makers Luke Swenson, Tanner Couch and Tobin "Toby" Hill. An all-star cast of ABS bladesmiths features Bill Burke, Shane Taylor, Shayne Carter and Trevor Morgan, to name a few. Other top award-winning makers include Gavin Hawk, Wes Hibben, Keanison Knives, Princeton Wong, Tom Krein, Corey Dunlap, Eric Fritz,

Exhibiting at BLADE Show West for the first time will be BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-of-Fame® member Jim Sornberger, known for such majestic Michael Price-style daggers as this one in quartz and celluloid tortoise shell, ATS-34 stainless steel, and a gold frame and fittings. Overall length: 12 inches. Engraving: Jim Sornberger. (SharpByCoop image)

"THE WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED AND PRESENTED THEIR AWARDS IN A SPECIAL CEREMONY THE FRIDAY NIGHT OF THE SHOW."



Pearce Richardson, Mike Tyre and Jared Oeser. There are many more. For the full exhibitor list, visit bladeshowwest.com.

SHOW HALL BUZZ

The factory knife section is always a swarm of activity at BLADE Show West, and this year's rendition promises more of the same. Leading exhibiting knife companies will include Boker; Bradford USA; Chaves Knives; Cobratec; Cold Steel; Dauntless Manufacturing; Dwyer Custom Goods; Fox Knives; Heretic; Hogue; Jack Wolf Knives; Kershaw/ZT; Pro-Tech; SOG; Spyderco; Squid Industries; McNees Knives; Poikiloblade; Suprlativ Knives; Strider Knives; Tactile Knife Co.; TOPS Knives; WE Knife; White River Knife & Tool; Winkler Knives; and others. For the complete exhibitor list, visit bladeshowwest.com.

Be sure to check out the ZT 0556, the BLADE Magazine 2025 Automatic Knife Of The Year®, at the Kershaw/Zero Tolerance booth. (Jocelyn Frasier image)

WHAT: **BLADE SHOW WEST 2025**

WHERE: **SALT PALACE CONVENTION CENTER**

DAYS AND TIMES:

FRIDAY, OCT. 10, 10:30 A.M.-6 P.M.,
WITH EARLY BIRD TICKETHOLDERS ENTERING AT 10 A.M.

SATURDAY, OCT. 11, 10 A.M.-6 P.M.

By the time the show's over, Gavin Hawk (left, center) of Hawk Knives may hold the Salt Palace Convention Center record for most handshakes.

FLIPPING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Also set to return is the West Coast Flipping Championships hosted by Squid Industries. It will be the sixth annual version of the title, with head-to-head/live balisong flipping matchups in an elimination/bracket-style competition. Awards and prizes will go to the top finishers. Last year's winner was Banks Tracy, aka Banksqro. Max Wenham, aka Balisongnerd, finished second and Madi Thomas, aka Oximityy, placed third.

For the times and locations for the championships, check the signs and schedules prominently placed in and around the show hall. Also, see the free BLADE Show West Program distributed at the show for schedules and updates.

BEST OF THE BEST

The show's best custom and factory knives will be determined by a panel of judges assembled by the BLADE Show West staff.

This year's custom knife categories: Best in Show; Best Hunter; Best Kitchen Knife; Best Damascus; Best Slip Joint; Best Fixed Blade; Best Folder; Best M.A.C.K. (Machine Assisted Custom Knife); and Best of the Rest. Returning winners exhibiting at this year's show, with the categories they won in parentheses, are Pearce Richardson (Best Fixed

"THE FACTORY KNIFE SECTION IS ALWAYS A SWARM OF ACTIVITY AT BLADE SHOW WEST."

The show buzzed with activity during peak times last year.

Corey Dunlap won for Best Kitchen Knife in the custom judging at last year's show and returns to exhibit this year.

Blade/Best in Show); Corey Dunlap (Best Kitchen Knife); Princeton Wong (Best M.A.C.K.); and Jared Oeser (Best M.A.C.K. Contender).

On the factory side, the award categories: Best American Made, Best Imported, Best EDC, Best Fixed Blade, Best Folder and Best in Show. Returning exhibitor winners, with the categories they won in parentheses, are Poikiloblade (Best Folder/Best in Show) and Pro-Tech (Best American Made).

For the times and locations for the judging, signs and schedules

To augment his award-winning forged fixed blades, ABS master smith Bill Burke has expanded into slipjoints such as his trapper in River of Fire stainless damascus and black-lip mother-of-pearl. Closed length: 3.75 inches. (SharpBy-Coop image)

Carol Watson's Orange Coast Auctions

Antique & Modern Firearms Auction

Sunday, November 2, 2025

Unique, High End William Henry Folding Knives

Exceptional Fabbri Best Quality
Sporting Grade Over/Under Shotguns

Carol Watson's OCA Orange Coast AUCTIONS

Auction begins at 11am.
Online bidding available via Proxibid.
Absentee and Phone Bids accepted.
California Bond #100166176

www.cwocauctions.com info@cwocauctions.com office: 714-213-8709

will be prominently placed in and around the show hall. Also, see the free BLADE Show West Program distributed at the show for schedules and updates.

The winners will be announced and presented their awards in a special ceremony the Friday night of the show. See the free BLADE Show West Program for the time and venue.

**While Leatherman exhibited at BLADE Show West when it was held in Portland, this will be the company's first time to exhibit at the show's Salt Lake City venue.*

For the complete exhibitor list and more show info, visit bladeshowwest.com, and/or pick up your FREE BLADE Show West Program at the show.

Jocelyn Frasier of JFrasier Photography is the official photographer of BLADE Show West 2025.

For the contact information for the knives in the story, see "Where To Get 'Em" on page 45.

For the latest knives, knife news, trends and more visit ***blademag.com****,* BLADE®*'s popular* ***Instagram*** *page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***Twitter****.*

The Wraith 4 is the BLADE Magazine 2025 American-Made Folding Knife Of The Year® and representative of the world-class knives that will be on display at the Heretic booth.

Princeton Wong won Best M.A.C.K. in the custom judging at BLADE Show West '24 and returns to exhibit this year. His Persevere in a 3.75-inch wharncliffe blade of Damasteel damascus features engraving by Chip Valtakis. Closed length: 4.5 inches. (SharpByCoop image)

TOPS Knives will showcase its special brand of hard-use knives. Company CEO Leo Espinoza holds the Storm Vector at last year's show.

F1 Pilot Knife

It has now been 30 years since we launched the epoch-making survival knife F1 for the Swedish military. The knife was a huge success on the civilian market as well, allowing us to focus entirely on developing and selling only our own products. Today, we sell all over the world and are among the best manufacturers.

Visit *www.fallkniven.com* for more information.

@officialfallkniven
FallknivenSweden

www.fallkniven.com
info@fallkniven.se

FÄLLKNIVEN
QUALITY KNIVES
SWEDEN

US distributors:
www.blueridgeknives.com
www.joutman.com

RECOIL
CAN CON
CAROLINAS
SHOOT SUPPRESSED ALL DAY
FOR $50 BUCKS
TRY BEFORE YOU BUY! HUNDREDS OF GUNS, SUPPRESSORS AND OPTICS + GEAR FOR SALE + 50+ LANES OF FIREARMS + DAILY GIVEAWAYS
NOV 7-8 2025
FRI & SAT: 9AM-4PM | NOV 6- VIP ONLY
CLINTON HOUSE PLANTATION | CLINTON, SC
GET YOUR TICKETS: CANCONEVENT.COM

BLADE SHOW TACTICAL
KNIFE SHOW | RANGE DAY

NOV 7 FRIDAY ONLY

OFFGRID BASECAMP
TACTICAL TRAINING EXPERIENCE

NEW AT CANCON CAROLINAS

CUSTOM TACTICAL KNIFE PAVILION

NJG NOTJUSTGUNS.COM
ZASTAVA ARMS USA
AS DESIGNS ACTIVE SAFETY SYSTEMS
B.O.S.S SILENCERS
PTR
SIG SAUER
HUXWRX SAFETY CO.
SILENCER CENTRAL

KOVIX
CANIK SUPERIOR FIREARMS
LayerX Suppression
IWI ISRAEL WEAPON INDUSTRIES
RUGGED SUPPRESSORS
KAC KNIGHTS ARMAMENT
REVIC
DEAD AIR silencers
TiON
WREN METAL WORKS LIVERS NEVER DIE
EAA
GIRSAN
THOR TARGETS
SHAW ARMAMENT
ON THE RANGE PODCAST
ATAC DEFENSE
BARRETT
TROY
GEMTECH
WOLFPACK ARMORY
WILSON COMBAT
SIEGE
B&T
GUNWERKS
MAXIM DEFENSE
BDE
PALMETTO STATE ARMORY
NINE LINE
ALL TITANIUM METALS
LMT
THE PROVING GROUNDS
DPMS
AAC THE SILENT AUTHORITY
CENTURY ARMS
AVCWAR
Q
ZERO TECH
AXCESS
MEPROLIGHT USA
CANCO SILENCERS
WALTHER
TIMNEY TRIGGERS USA
LWRC
TAURUS
Smith & Wesson
ZRODELTA
PWS
TRUE BLUE GUN LUBRICANTS
MISSION FIRST TACTICAL
WATCHDOG TACTICAL
WOOX
GATORZ
AUXMFG AUXILIARY MANUFACTURING USA Made Knives
DA TARGETS
GUN RIGHTS
MANTIS
SCOPE BUMPER
GUN OWNERS OF AMERICA
SMKW
SECOND AMENDMENT FOUNDATION

BY **LES ROBERTSON** BLADE® FIELD EDITOR

A Full Spectrum of Options

Hot forged hunters provide many choices and affordable prices

The primary trend that has emerged in custom forged blades over the past 18 months is the growing popularity of the hunting and utility knife. The options seem limitless, from forged carbon steel and Micarta® to mosaic damascus and ivory.

The best seller among the group is the carbon steel hunter featuring a Micarta handle. An excellent example is from award-winning ABS master smith Josh Fisher—world-class craftsmanship at an affordable price. Designed for serious work, this knife will last, if properly maintained, for the owner's lifetime and beyond.

One of my favorites is a hunter from Slovenian knifemaker Jan Hafinec featuring the unique *hamon* of his Bonfire Hunter. Jan's hamon looks like flames streaking across the blade. He achieves the distinc-

MAKER: Dan Lewis
MODEL: Drop-point hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 4.5"
BLADE MATERIAL: Forged *san-mai* w/a core of W-2 tool steel, an outer layer of damascus and a middle layer of copper
GUARD MATERIAL: Bronze
HANDLE MATERIAL: Desert ironwood
OVERALL LENGTH: 9"
SHEATH: Leather model custom made by Dan Lewis
KNIFE TO KNOW: Dan is an ABS journeyman smith
HIS PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE: $550
HIS EMAIL: lewisabq@gmail.com (Robertson's Custom Cutlery knife image)

"THE BEST SELLER AMONG THE GROUP IS THE CARBON STEEL HUNTER FEATURING A MICARTA HANDLE."

tive look by cleaning the grind and normalizing the blade. He then applies Satanite* clay to the blade in the desired shape for the hamon. After drying the clay, he puts the blade in his electric kiln. Upon removing it from the kiln, he plunges the blade into fast-quenching oil to give the hamon its fiery look.

A steel construction that has been a favorite of collectors for several years now is *san-mai*. A hunter by ABS journeyman smith Wess Barnhill has a great example of a san-mai blade, featuring a carbon steel core sandwiched between outer layers of stainless steel. One of my favorite aspects of this type of laminated blade is that each one is unique, encouraging collectors to have more than one in their collection, if they so choose, as no two are the same. Barnhill's blade material of choice is a 1075 carbon steel core sandwiched between two pieces of 410 stainless steel. He likes to zip-weld all the edges together, as this keeps out the oxygen while forge welding. He sets the temperature to 2,350 F° for 10 minutes to produce his san-mai blades.

COPPER SAN-MAI

Seeing the work of ABS journeyman smith Dan Lewis at the 2024 BLADE Show, I was immediately drawn to it. His unique copper damascus san-mai features carbon steel, damascus and copper. He also offers the same style of blade with nickel if you prefer. He explained that monosteel and damascus blades are forged to shape and taken through a precise heat treatment. Copper san-mai blades are a different story.

"Once I create the billet—layering high-carbon steel with pure nickel damascus and copper—I do very little forging beyond drawing out the tang. The rest is done through careful grinding," he explained. "Precision is everything. The billet must be measured exactly to keep a consistent core of high-carbon steel, with even layers of damascus and copper on each side. Copper looks great but it doesn't belong on the cutting edge. I always use a high-carbon core for strength and sharpness. When it comes to etching, combining pure nickel and copper allows me to use a stronger, proprietary acid. The result is a deep, dark etch in just seconds, creating a bold finish that highlights every layer."

Dan combines the copper damascus san-mai with blued fittings and desert ironwood to create an eye-catching work of art at an affordable price.

MAKER: Bob Earhart
MODEL: Spring River Hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 4.75"
BLADE MATERIAL: Ladder-pattern damascus
GUARD MATERIAL: Blued carbon steel w/bronze spacer
HANDLE MATERIAL: Desert ironwood
OVERALL LENGTH: 9.75"
SHEATH: Leather model custom made by Bob Earhart
KNIFE TO KNOW: Bob is an ABS journeyman smith
HIS PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE: $650
HIS EMAIL: bobearhart82@gmail.com (Robertson's Custom Cutlery knife image)

One of the best parts of attending knife shows is the ability to compare knives, knife quality, knifemakers, knife prices, etc.—apples to apples, if you will. (Eric Eggly/Point-Seven image)

I saw ABS journeyman smith Bob Earhart's knives on the internet while working on my checklist for the BLADE Show. I contacted him several months before the show to discuss his knives. In addition to his excellent knifemaking skills, the use of a blued guard and bronze spacer in conjunction with presentation-grade desert ironwood gives his hunter a stunning look. Instead of using a forge press die, Bob grinds a ladder pattern into his steel billet. Grinding toward the edge, he cuts deeper and then hammers out the grooves, creating a complete ladder pattern throughout the blade.

Additionally, Bob has the one skill that many knifemakers lack: effective communication. He encouraged me to provide my input and kept me informed about the knife build every step of the way. When I buy my first knife from a knifemaker, I really appreciate that.

FRAME-HANDLE JEWEL

The frame-handle hunter is arguably one of the more difficult knives to build. Add mosaic damascus and ivory to the equation and it becomes even more challenging. Given the complex nature of ABS master smith Steve Randall's frame-handle hunter, I asked him to explain his process for building the knife.

He starts by making a billet of a W's-pattern damascus. The layer count and stack are personal preferences. The lower the count, the wider the pattern. Once the billet is formed to the preferred layer count, Steve cuts it into pieces, restacks the

"GRINDING TOWARD THE EDGE, HE CUTS DEEPER AND THEN HAMMERS OUT THE GROOVES, CREATING A COMPLETE LADDER PATTERN THROUGHOUT THE BLADE."

MAKER: Josh Fisher
MODEL: Drop-point hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 4.5"
BLADE MATERIAL: 1084 carbon steel
BLADE FINISH: Satin
GUARD MATERIAL: Stainless steel
HANDLE MATERIAL: Vintage Westinghouse Micarta®
OVERALL LENGTH: 8.75"
KNIFE TO KNOW: Josh Fisher is an ABS master smith
SHEATH: Leather model custom made by Josh
HIS PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE: $550
HIS EMAIL: fisherknives@aol.com
(Robertson's Custom Cutlery image)

MAKER: Wess Barnhill
MODEL: Drop-point hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 5"
BLADE MATERIAL: *San-mai* of 1075 carbon and 410 stainless steels
GUARD AND BUTTCAP: Stainless steel
HANDLE MATERIAL: Sambar stag
OVERALL LENGTH: 9.75"
SHEATH: Leather model custom made by Wess Barnhill
KNIFE TO KNOW: Wess is an ABS journeyman smith
HIS PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE: $825
HIS EMAIL: wess.barnhill@gmail.com (Robertson's Custom Cutlery image)

MAKER: Jan Hafinec
MODEL: Bonfire Hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 5"
BLADE MATERIAL: Forged C105 carbon steel w/double *hamon*
GUARD MATERIAL: Bronze
HANDLE MATERIAL: Desert ironwood
OVERALL LENGTH: 10 1/8"
SHEATH: Leather model custom made by Jan Hafinec
HIS PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE: $600
HIS EMAIL: jhafinec@gmail.com (Robertson's Custom Cutlery image)

"HE LIKES TO ZIP-WELD ALL THE EDGES TOGETHER, AS THIS KEEPS OUT THE OXYGEN WHILE FORGE WELDING."

pieces, and forge welds them back together. He splits the resulting stack in half using a dull wedge and welds the two halves back together to create a feather damascus billet. The splitting process with the dull wedge is what drags the hot steel to make the feather design.

Steve pointed out that increasing the layers also increases the potential for flaws. Often, the flaws don't reveal themselves until the blade is being ground. If flaws are discovered, the blade must be thrown away and all those work hours are lost. (Author's note: Please understand that due to the increased degree of difficulty and risk of blade failure, any mosaic-type of damascus used in the knife's construction will increase the price. All damascus is not equal!)

Steve said the most challenging

"THE SPLITTING PROCESS WITH THE DULL WEDGE IS WHAT DRAGS THE HOT STEEL TO MAKE THE FEATHER DESIGN."

part of a frame-handle knife is connecting the frame to the guard or ferrule so there are no gaps and the fit appears seamless. Also, how the handle is attached to the blade is key. There are various ways to attach that can add to the complicated nature of a frame, for example, hidden pins, hidden finial, external finial, etc.

CHANGING CONDITIONS

In the March *BLADE®*, I wrote about the matrix I use to determine which knives to buy. Before that story was published, BLADE Editor Steve Shackleford asked me what conditions would cause me to adjust my matrix. One condition would be a change in the popularity of a market sector, such as custom fighters, gut hooks, stilettos, etc. With a current slowdown in damascus bowie sales, primarily due to the bowies' price point, an alternative emerged, offering many of the same options at a more affordable price: the forged hunting knife.

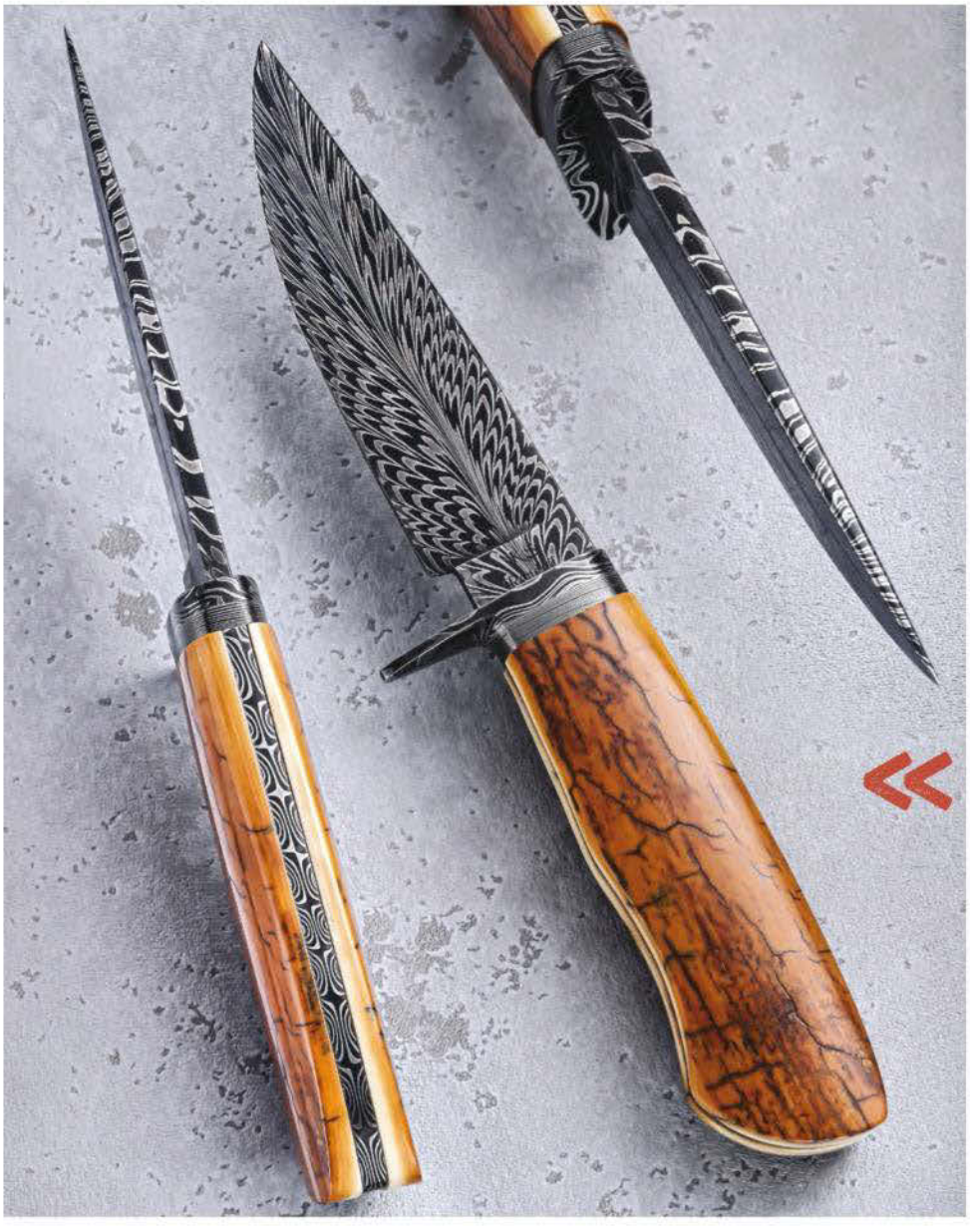
One of the best aspects of attending a knife show is the ability to compare knives, apples to apples if you will. This year's BLADE Show resulted in me updating my matrix with regard to custom hunting knives.

Before the show I provided a set of parameters to 10 ABS journeyman and master smiths, both domestic and international, to build a damascus hunting knife to my specifications Those parameters were: a 4.75-inch ladder-pattern damascus blade, damascus guard (no pattern specified), and a wood handle (no wood specified). The smiths' quotes ranged in prices from $600 to $1,250 per knife.

Still think you don't need your own matrix?

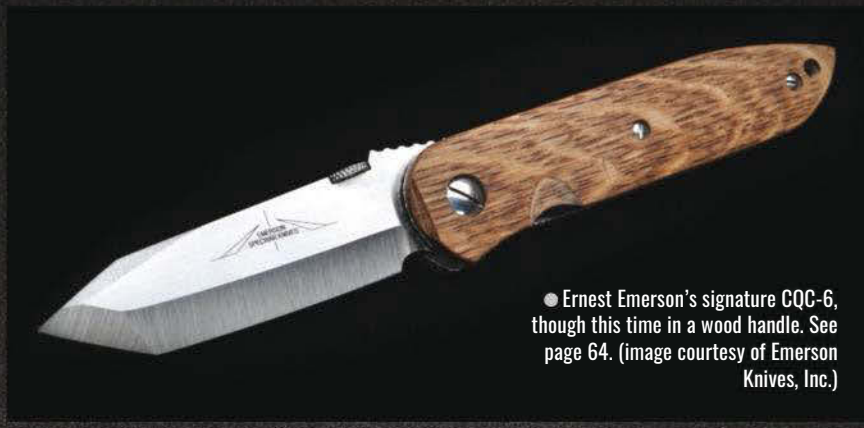
**CAUTION: When using Satanite hamon clay, "wear protective gloves, outfit, and face and eye protection. If on skin, wash with soap and eater. If on eyes, rinse with water for several minutes. If eye irritation persists, get medical attention."*

For the latest knives, knife news, trends, and more, visit ***blademag.com,*** BLADE®*'s popular* ***Instagram*** *page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***Twitter.***



MAKER: Steve Randall
MODEL: Frame-Handle Hunter
BLADE LENGTH: 4.75"
BLADE MATERIAL: Feather-pattern damascus
GUARD AND FRAME: Feather-pattern damascus
HANDLE MATERIAL: Mastodon ivory
OVERALL LENGTH: 9.5"
SHEATH: Leather model custom made by Steve Randall
KNIFE TO KNOW: Steve is an ABS master smith
HIS PRICE FOR A SIMILAR KNIFE: $1,400
HIS EMAIL: ksrblades@gmail.com (SharpByCoop image)

WHERE TO GET 'EM



● Ernest Emerson's signature CQC-6, though this time in a wood handle. See page 64. (image courtesy of Emerson Knives, Inc.)

HOMEGROWN SKINNERS P. 12
Montana Knife Co., https://www.montanaknifecompany.com, josh@montanaknifecompany.com; TOPS Knives, Dept. BL11, 3415 E. 109 N., Idaho Falls, ID 83401 208-542-0113 info@topsknives.com, www.topsknives.com; White River Knife & Tool, attn: Matt Cammenga, Dept. BL11, 130 Mason Dr., Coopersville, MI 49404 616-997-0026 matt@thewhiteriver.com, www.whiteriverknives.com; W.R. Case & Sons, attn: F. Feightner, Dept. BL11, 50 Owens Way, Bradford, PA 16701 800-523-6350 CR@caseknives.com, www.wrcase.com

ABOVE THE PREY P. 24
Chip Carlisle, https://skjeggmennkniver.com; Jason Fry, frycustomknives@gmail.com; Alex Harrison, nightwatchknivs.com; Paul LeBatard, lebatardknives@aol.com;
White River Knife & Tool, attn: Matt Cammenga, Dept. BL11, 130 Mason Dr., Coopersville, MI 49404 616-997-0026 matt@thewhiteriver.com, www.whiteriverknives.com

UTAH AWESOME P. 32
Bill Burke, billburke@bladegallery.com; Corey Dunlap, corey@coreydunlap.com; Hawk Knives, gavin.hawk@hawkknifedesigns.com; Heretic Knives, Dept. BL11, Palm Bay, FL 772-918-4065 Anthony@hereticknives.com, hereticknives.com; Trevor Morgan, applevalleyforge@gmail.com; Jim Sornberger, sierrasjs@icloud.com; TOPS Knives, craig@topsknives.com; Zero Tolerance, c/o Kai USA Ltd., attn: D. Aiello, Dept. BL11, 18600 SW Teton Ave., Tualatin, OR 97062 800-325-2891 daiello@kai-usa.com, www.ztknives.com; Princeton Wong, create@princecustoms.com

A FULL SPECTRUM OF OPTIONS P. 40
Wess Barnhill, wess.barnhille@gmail.com; Bob Earhart, bobearhart82@gmail.com; Josh Fisher, fisherknives@aol.com; Jan Hafinec, jhafinec@gmail.com; Dan Lewis, lewisabq@gmail.com; Steve Randall, ksrblades@gmail.com

GRUNTS FOR THE HUNT P. 46
Fallkniven, attn: E. Hjortberger, Dept. BL11, Granatvagen 8, S-961 23 Boden, Sweden VAT # SE556494-8684-01, P +46 (0) 921 544 22 info@fallkniven.se, www.fallkniven.com; Hogue Knives, attn: Bill Crook, Dept. BL11, POB 91360, Henderson, NV 89009 805-239-1440 800-438-4747 office@hogueinc.com, hogueknives.com; Spartan Blades, attn: C. Iovito, Dept. BL11, 625 S.E. Service Rd., Southern Pines, NC 28387 910-757-0035, contact@spartanblades.com, www.spartanbladesusa.com

KNIVES LIE, DAGGERS DON'T P. 52
Greg Cimms, https://gcknives.com; Vince Evans, evansvk@gmail.com; Jordan LaMothe, jordanlamotheblades@gmail.com; Mike Quesenberry, quesenberryknives@gmail.com; Bertie Rietveld, bertie@rietveldknives.com; Jackson Rumble, rumblejackson@gmail.com; Spartan Blades, ciovito@spartanbladesusa.com; Neels van den Berg, neels@blackdragonforge.com

WACKY WARRANTY CLAIMS P. 58
Chris Reeve Knives, attn: A. Reeve, Dept. BL11, 2949 S. Victory View Way, Boise, ID 83709-2946 208.375.0367 www.chrisreeve.com; TOPS Knives, Dept. BL11, 3415 E. 109 N., Idaho Falls, ID 83401 208-542-0113 info@topsknives.com, www.topsknives.com; Winkler Knives, attn: Daniel Winkler, Dept. BL11, POB 2166, Blowing Rock, NC 28607 828-262-3691 info@winklerknives.com, www.winklerknives.com

For the latest knives, knife news, trends and more, visit ***blademag.com****,* BLADE®*'s popular* ***Instagram*** *page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***X*** *(****Twitter****).*

BLADE

>> IMAGES BY MARTY STANFIELD, MARTY STANFIELD PHOTOGRAPHY, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

GRUNTS FOR THE HUNT

Consider three hunting knives built for your outdoor needs

From left: Spartan Blades Harsey Nessmuk, Fallkniven F1L3GMM and Hogue Knives Extrak.

Fixed-blade hunting knives are the workhorses of your hunting gear. They handle a lot of the grunt work associated with cutting, including field dressing game after the take-down to various cutting tasks while hunting or in camp. As a result, it is important to choose a hunter that not only has the features and the materials you want but one that fits your budget as well.

With its slender form, the Hogue Knives Extrak takes a minimalist approach to fixed hunters. Hogue President Jim Bruhns designed it to be lightweight and agile. Available in two sizes, the Extrak and its bigger brother the Extrak XL, both tackle heavy field-dress work while offering comfortable carry minus the bulk of many fixed hunters.

The modified clip-point blade is 3.3 inches of high-performance CPM MagnaCut stainless steel in a stonewashed finish. The peel-ply orange G-10 scales are textured enough so the material is a bit grabby. The orange fits right in with the hunter theme. Despite the handle's thin nature, slightly expanded front and rear sections help form a guard of sorts to avoid gripping difficulties. Overall length: 7.375 inches.

Thanks to the thin blade stock and full, flat primary grind, think of this knife as a scalpel. Scalpels have lean handles but the blades are thin enough to cut easily with very little applied force. Same thing with the Extrak. The blade bites into meat so easily that the slender handle doesn't matter.

At first I was a bit apprehensive that the thin grip would affect the knife's use. The more I cut with the Extrak, the more I saw that the thin blade is where the work takes place. It slices so cleanly and efficiently that you need not apply pressure on the handle to make the cut. After a

The Hogue Extrak might be a lightweight and thin fixed blade but don't let that fool you. Cutting performance wise, this knife punches above its class. The thin blade cuts like a scalpel.

The skinner-like blade of the Spartan Harsey Nessmuk excels at slicing tasks.

while, the lean grip doesn't matter because you are too busy admiring the knife for its extreme cutting power and efficiency. From sausages, steaks and veggies to cardboard and opening mail, the Extrak dispatches all with aplomb. It's a great candidate for your next restaurant outing. It is a very low-profile design that won't attract unwanted attention in public, even with its bright orange handle.

The Extrak also makes a great utility knife. However, shy away from rough use and any sort of cutting where you simultaneously twist the blade. MagnaCut is a tough steel but as thin as the knife is, you can damage the edge or break the tip if you use it too hard. It is a precise cutting tool. I rate the knife high on the list for an EDC fixed blade as well.

Due to the knife's minimalist design, it might be possible to custom fabricate a Kydex neck sheath for it to wear under a shirt for more discreet carry. Don't try it with the supplied slip cover as there isn't enough tension to hold the blade securely for such neck carry. The molded ABS plastic sheath features an UltiClip fastener. The setup enables you to carry the knife clipped to the top of a pants pocket, much as you would a tactical folder. The knife rides securely in this manner, with the entire handle sticking out for easy deployment. The sheath is simple but works and is of pretty good quality. Country of origin: USA. MSRP: $199.95.

CLASSIC NESSY

The Spartan Blades Harsey Nessmuk is the largest knife of the test group. The classic Nessmuk design with its distinctive bulbous tip has proven to be a very effective outdoor knife that excels at many tasks, from field dressing to camp utility chores. The

Maroon Micarta® is the handle material of choice for the Fallkniven F1L3GMM fixed hunter. It is pinned to the tang using Corby rivets.

The Fallkniven (left) rides in a nice pouch-style leather sheath with a button-snap flap closure. The Spartan (middle) has a rugged molded thermoplastic sheath with a thumb-retention lock. The Hogue (right) comes in a molded thermoplastic sheath and an UltiClip fastener (not pictured).

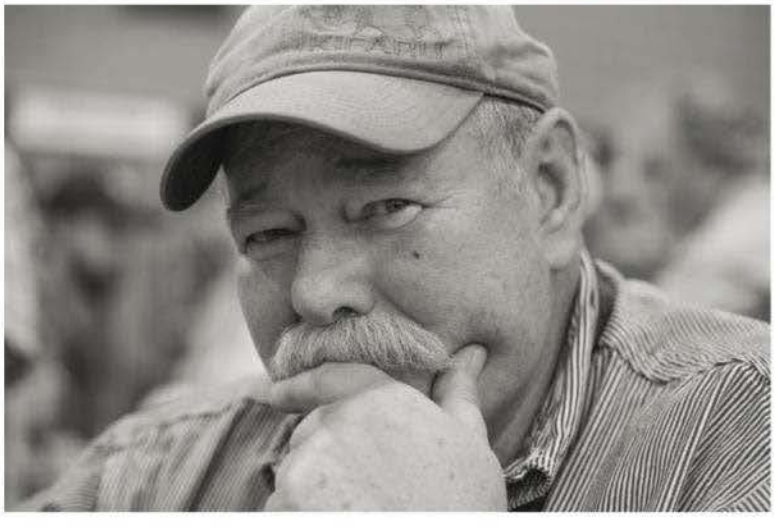
skinner-esque blade is a highly effective slicer. Do an internet search for George Washington Sears and the Nessmuk blade style. The history of how the design came about is a rather interesting read and gives some insight as to why the blade is shaped as it is.

In the Spartan entry, the Nessmuk blade is paired with the handle design of BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-of-Fame® member Bill Harsey. The Creswell, Oregon, knifemaker is widely known for his tough fixed-blade designs for the Special Forces and his work with Cutlery Hall of Famers Col. Rex Applegate and Al Mar. The Nessmuk is yet another Harsey design for Spartan that includes the pair's tactical and other outdoor collaborations. It is part of Spartan's Silver Line, aka Professional Line, a mid-priced/made-in-the-USA (KA-BAR factory in upstate New York) series that is less expensive than the company's flagship Gold Line.

The Nessmuk blade is 5⅛ inches of flat-ground 1095 CRO-VAN carbon steel with a Rockwell hardness of 56-58 HRC. The 1095 offers a great balance of edge retention and ease of sharpening without the need of a complicated sharpener. At .1875-inch at the thickest and with a corrosion-resistant/low-glare black powder coat, the blade is well-equipped for high-performance outdoor work.

The rugged, molded thermoplastic sheath has a fabric-fastener loop to attach to a wide range of belt sizes. A thumb-retention lock holds the knife in place and three slits vent water, making it ideal for wet environments.

The handle is Grivory, an impact and fluid-resistant material that can be molded with various contours and chamfers that aid in attaining a comfortable, secure grip. The durable/usable handle feels as if it were molded to your hand and has no hot spots. At 10.8 ounces and 10 inches overall, the Spartan Harsey Nessmuk is big yet lightweight enough to tackle most any hunting knife chore you throw its way. MSRP: $225.



BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-of-Fame member Bill Harsey (Ronald S. Smith image)

HARD-USE BEAST

The Fallkniven F1L3GMM Next Generation fixed blade was designed as a pilot survival knife but is also a knockout crossover fixed hunter. The blade boasts a laser etching of the JAS 39 Gripen Next Generation Swedish fighter jet, but don't let that fool you. The Fallkniven entry actually has a hunting knife pedigree.

As the company website notes, the work of BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-of-Fame® member Bob Loveless was the inspiration for the F1L3GMM. You can almost see it in the knife's lines. The 3.9-inch drop-point blade has plenty of belly to facilitate slicing chores. The maroon Micarta® handle is very elegant and sports the right contours to accommodate your hand, and is very comfortable to hold with no worry of hot spots. The nickel-silver guard fits the tang seamlessly and is a great anchor point to prevent your hand from sliding forward. The handle fastens to the tang with a pair of Corby bolts, and a gold medallion with three crowns decorates the grip's center. At 8.2 inches overall, the F1L3GMM is sized just right for a hunter. The

Despite the thin nature of the Extrak's handle, slightly expanded front and rear sections help form a guard of sorts to avoid gripping difficulties.

VZ GRIPS
CUSTOM GUN GRIPS
G·10
COMPOSITE DAGGERS

FOR A SPECIAL DISCOUNT
USE THE QR CODE OR VIST
VZGRIPS.COM/BLADE
©2024 VZ, INC. • 3616 Jackson Bluff Road
Tallahassee, FL 32304 • 850-422-1911.

The convex-ground blade of the Fallkniven powers easily through most any medium. According to the author, "it is one of the sharpest cutting edges out there."

As the author noted, one of the hallmarks of a true Bill Harsey design is the handle. "His handle designs are among the best in the industry," the author observed. "They are contoured to fit your hand like a glove, without any hot spots." Handle features also prevent forward or backward sliding of the hand, while the 3D texturing adds enough grip to be secure but not aggressive.

The Extrak comes with two carry choices: the standard option inside the waistband using the UltiClip fastener mounted on a molded thermoplastic sheath (top), and a slip cover (bottom) for the blade to tote the knife in a bag, pack, etc.

sewn black leather belt sheath sports quality construction, and the "F1"-stamped flap closure with button snap conceals the entire knife.

The Fallkniven entry is a hard-use beast. The blade slices very cleanly and expediently. If you've never used a knife with a full convex edge, you are definitely in for a treat. Fallkniven is known for convex edges that are both sharp and quite durable, not to mention easier to maintain due to the geometry. The convex edge bites in deep and hard, and you can use it a tad rough as well without fear of the edge chipping out. It is also very well suited for general use around camp or the kitchen. The blade is fairly thick but, due to the convex edge, dives into whatever is being cut and propels the rest of the blade through. Just because it's thick doesn't mean it cannot slice effectively. This is a knife of heirloom quality that also has plenty of horsepower for getting real work done.

The handle is comfortable, rounded and contoured in the right places and devoid of hot spots during extended use. I have always been a big fan of Micarta® for both folder and fixed-blade handles. It's pretty much the ultimate user material given its light weight, dimensional stability and imperviousness to most known liquids. Plus, it comes in a wide array of colors, and the maroon adds a nice splash of color without being overly flashy. You don't see too many maroon-handled knives, so this one is a breath of fresh air.

Country of origin: Sweden. MSRP: $499.99. Yes, it is on the pricey side for a production hunter but in return you get a very well-built cutter executed with the best materials. I don't think you can find a better knife for the money. If you love European engineering and manufacturing, this is the hunter for you.

For the contact information for the knives in the story, see "Where To Get 'Em" on page 45.

For the latest knives, knife news, trends and more, visit ***blademag.com,*** BLADE®'s *popular Instagram page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***X (Twitter)****.*

BLADE

NEW APOC Knives Designed by Jason Breeden
The next chapter of the APOC legacy is written in steel with our NEW Fallout Series of blades designed by Jason Breeden. Featuring pierced black canvas Micarta handle slabs over APOC Red G10 Liners allow for a superior grip. Each Kydex sheath is designed to piggy-back on the other. Get the edge you need with the next generation of APOC Survival Tools.
D2 Steel - Blade Length: 5"
Overall: 10"
Breeden Torrent Fixed Blade
KP41030 - MSRP: $119
D2 Steel - Blade Length: 3 3/4"
Open: 8 1/4" Closed: 4"
Breeden Whisper II
KP41010 - MSRP: $119
APOC
Breeden Zephyr Necktie Knife
KP41020 - MSRP: $109
D2 Steel - Blade Length: 2 1/2"
Overall: 6"
Breeden Derecho
SP41040 - MSRP: $219
Differentially Tempered 1075 Steel
Blade Length: 18 1/4"
Handle Length: 10 1/4"
Overall: 28 3/4"
Don't just take our word for it. Read the reviews on our website from real APOC Survival Tools owners and survival enthusiasts.
Visit our website for details https://apocsurvivaltools.com/
Or call (423) 332-4700 - Dealer inquiries welcome!

This modern *cinquedea* by Vince Evans has a blade with a broad, rigid base tapering to an unforgiving point. Fullers down the middle serve to make the blade both lighter and stiffer. Equal parts status symbol and lethal instrument, it embodies the dagger's refusal to compromise between beauty and purpose.

KNIVES LIE, DAGGERS DON'T

PART I

Form, function and purpose of the most stab-ready knives

Few weapons are as simple in concept yet as demanding to design as the dagger. At first glance, it is merely a blade—sometimes short, sometimes long, usually but not always double edged—yet every aspect of its form has been refined over millennia for one purpose: stabbing. Unlike blades that balance cutting, slicing or chopping, a dagger's geometry, materials and ergonomics allow no compromises in pursuit of its one purpose. From early Bronze-Age thrusting knives to the stilettos of the Renaissance, every angle in any dimension maximizes straight-line penetration. Whether for combat or display, understanding this purpose is essential for anyone who wishes to design, craft or appreciate these edged weapons. Even the most ornate ceremonial dagger should appear "stab-ready" at a glance, communicating the implied threat of the utilitarian tool with a statement of status and opulence.

"A DAGGER BLADE MUST HAVE SUFFICIENT SPINE THICKNESS AND RICASSO RIGIDITY TO RESIST EXCESSIVE BENDING UNDER THRUST LOAD."

Nothing's wasted and nothing's added in the Spartan Blades/Les George V-14, a perfect modern combat dagger parted to the essentials. It has a clean, double-edged profile that is driven by geometry and grip. (Spartan image)

PRIMARY FUNCTION

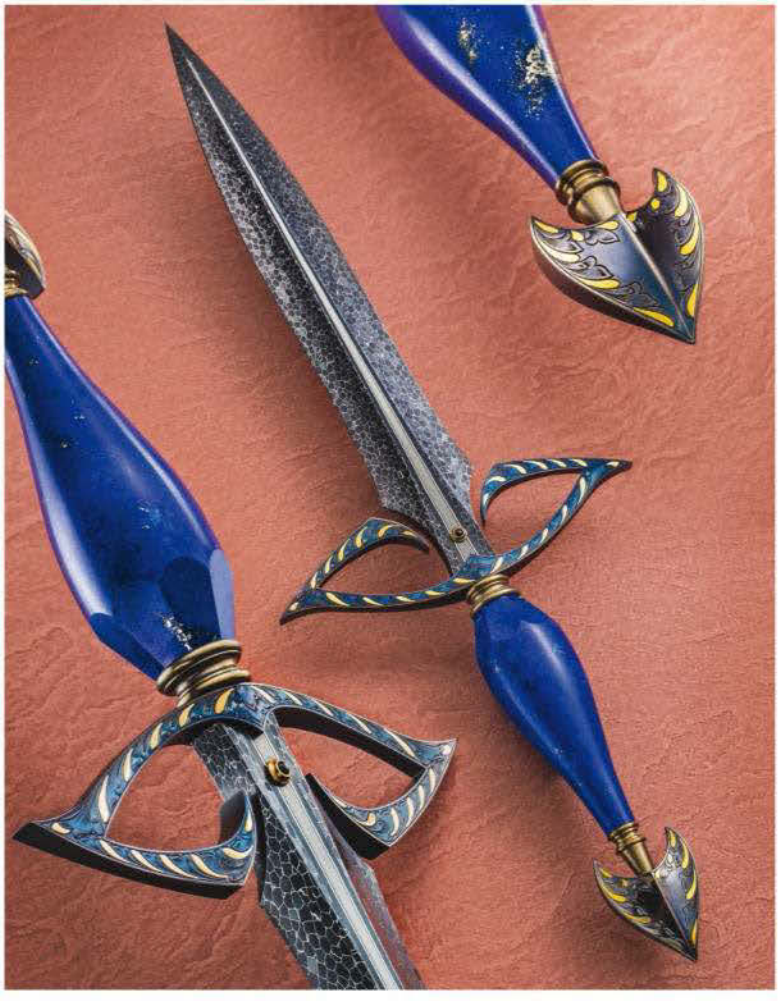
Every deadly stab starts with three critical design choices that define a dagger's unwavering purpose. A dagger blade must have sufficient

"ONLY THROUGH PRECISE TAPER AND TEMPER CAN A DAGGER ACHIEVE DEPTH WITHOUT SACRIFICING STRENGTH."

spine thickness and ricasso rigidity to resist excessive bending under thrust load; it should be tapered to an acute but robust point for minimal tip-entry resistance; and it requires flexibility balanced with rigidity so it can reach vital organs, often protected by armor, without breaking.

Early thrusting blades illustrate this principle as far back as the late Bronze Age. A broad base near the guard tapers rapidly to a narrow point, ensuring rigidity at the grip and sharpness at the tip. By the 1st century A.D., the Roman *pugio* perfected it. With a base often exceeding 5⁄16 inch in thickness and a central ridge tapering to a sharp apex, the pugio shed weight without losing stiffness. In practice, its point could pierce leather, flesh or weak links in chain mail, while its spine endured repeated jabs against shield bosses and bucklers.

Yet precision in stabbing demands more than brute strength, it requires avoiding gratuitous cutting-oriented features in a thrusting design. Serrations, upswept points, hooked tips, prying points and even bottle openers can be handy on a knife, depending on the task, but all of these undermine the straight-line force a dagger needs and disrupt smooth entry. If you ever find yourself in a situation where stabbing is required, by all means use whatever you've got—just don't complain when your bottle-opener tip gets snagged in an assailant's clothing. However, if you have the luxury of time and thought to design and make a dagger, strip



Extreme ornament, unconventional design, and opulent materials cannot disguise lethal intent and pure stabbing functionality in Bertie Rietveld's ornamental dagger.

Even in this highly stylized dagger by Jordan Lamothe, the spine ridge provides the stiffness and rigidity required for uncompromising penetration.

away anything that doesn't serve pure penetration. A dagger's geometry remains laser-focused on stabbing effectiveness.

Lastly, a dagger must balance penetration depth with material limits. A tip too slender might break or bend against bone or metal, while a tip too blunt simply won't enter. Ancient workers of bronze and iron didn't have modern labs or spreadsheets, yet somehow found the Goldilocks Zone that balanced reach and resilience. A well-tempered tip is tough enough to survive bone contact without snapping, yet with correct geometry stays stiff enough to slip between armor plates. Only through precise taper and temper can a dagger achieve depth without sacrificing strength.

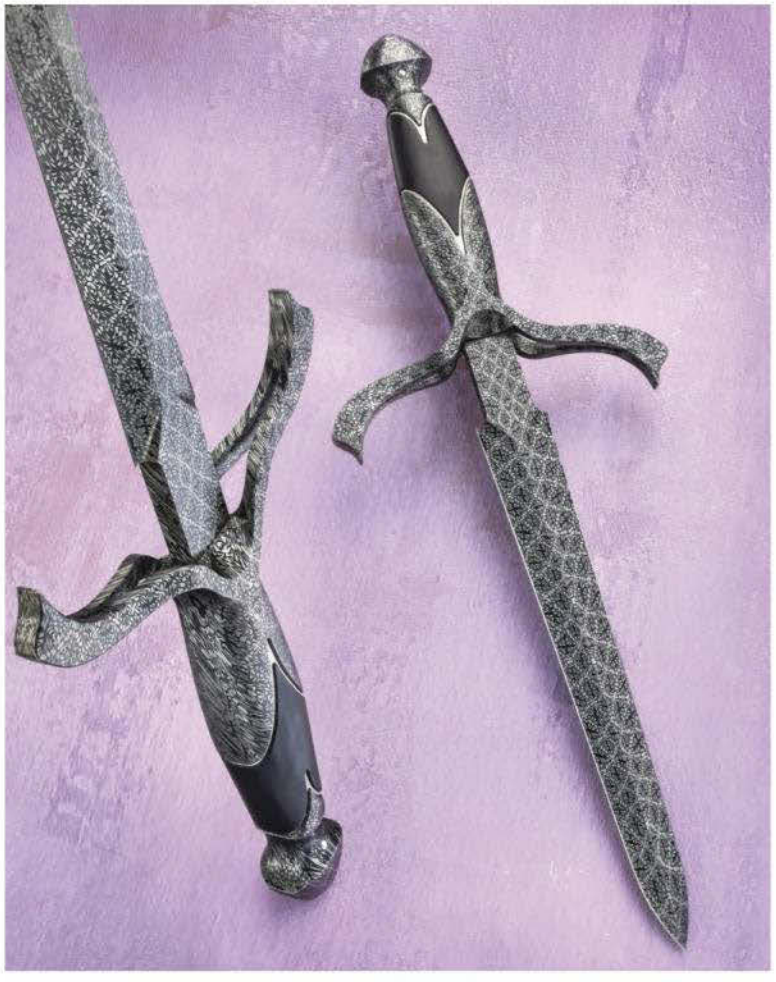
COMBAT VS. ART

From the earliest times, daggers fell into two broad categories: weapons of combat and symbols of prestige. The combat dagger was stripped to essentials—minimal ornamentation, maximum toughness—while the art or status dagger has always been free to bend the rules of pure function to satisfy aesthetic expression and make statements of personality and prestige. Nonetheless, even the most ornate display piece must exude "stab-readiness" at first glance, a silent promise inherited from its lethal lineage.

Surviving examples of Roman pu-

"EVEN THE MOST ORNATE DISPLAY PIECE MUST EXUDE 'STAB-READINESS' AT FIRST GLANCE."

The complex damascus pattern and construction style of this dagger by Australia's Jackson Rumble demonstrates that while he understands the essentials of a dagger, he's not afraid to push the boundaries of expression without compromising either the stabbing function or his artistic vision.



Jordan LaMothe's *pesh-kabz* features the classic T-shaped spine for stiffness and a reinforced tip for penetrating mail, leaving no doubt about its combat origins. (Chuck Ward image)

The junction of the handle, guard, and blade is where the true masters separate from the merely good—every element is a decision between comfort, control and ornament that fit together with no gaps. (Mike Quesenberry, Best of Show/Best Art Knife, 2011 OKCA Show)

CONSIGN WITH
ARIZONA
CUSTOM KNIVES
AND TURN YOUR
COLLECTION INTO CASH!

IT'S AS EASY AS THIS:

CAREFULLY BOX AND SHIP YOUR KNIVES TO US.

WE DO THE PRICING RESEARCH, WRITE DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS, AND PHOTOGRAPH EACH KNIFE.

MONITOR YOUR LISTINGS AND MONTHLY PAYOUTS THROUGH YOUR OWN PRIVATE ACCOUNT.

RECEIVE SCHEDULED PAYOUTS AS YOUR KNIVES SELL.

ARIZONA
CUSTOM KNIVES
WWW.ARIZONACUSTOMKNIVES.COM
SHARPTALK@ARIZONACUSTOMKNIVES.COM
1-904-826-4178

Old proportions, new precision, here is a stiletto that could have walked out of a Renaissance armory or a modern collector's case. (a collaboration among Greg Cimms, Neels van den Berg and Jordan LaMothe)

gios from army camps demonstrate the utilitarian design, but gilded pieces from the same era, with elaborate inlays and inscriptions, do not stray far from purpose despite the decoration. All share the same fundamental geometry: a stiff, thick base, reinforced spine and unwavering taper to a sharp, flat-ground point. The ornamented variants—often gifted as symbols of rank or worn by the wealthy and powerful—could feature ivory grips or gilded fittings without diminishing their stabbing credibility. Regardless of personal status or the knife's level of ornamentation, no one who saw a pugio drawn in malice would misunderstand the message or the danger. Combat heritage endows art daggers with an unmistakable threat that no amount of embellishment can conceal, though the pugios that did in Julius Caesar probably looked

"A DAGGER'S GEOMETRY REMAINS LASER-FOCUSED ON STABBING EFFECTIVENESS."

rather nice.

Another example is the *pesh-kabz*, a Persian-born dagger later adopted and lavishly ornamented by Mughal weaponsmiths. Its single-edged blade featured a thick spine and acutely tapered point, designed to pierce heavy mail and laminated armor. As Mughal craftsmanship flourished in Agra and Delhi, artisans added damascened patterns, jeweled pommels and silk-wrapped grips. Yet even a fully jeweled pesh-kabz retained the same reinforced spine and narrow, forward-weighted geometry as its battlefield ancestors. Worn at court in gilded sheaths, these daggers exhibited status while making it clear that underneath the glamor was a blade as deadly as any used in war. Art and combat, then, remain entwined.

This enduring marriage of lethality and ornamentation sets the stage for a deeper question: what separates an ordinary dagger from one that truly masters its intended purpose? The answer lies not just in history but in the details of profile, geometry, balance and structural refinement—each a mark of a dagger designed to do exactly what it must.

Next time: practical dagger design principles, planning proportions and symmetry, sketching, practical shapes, art-dagger design considerations and more.

For the contact information for the knives in the story, see "Where To Get 'Em" on page 45.

For the latest knives, knife news, trends, and more, visit ***blademag.com,*** BLADE®*'s popular Instagram page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***X (Twitter).***

BLADE

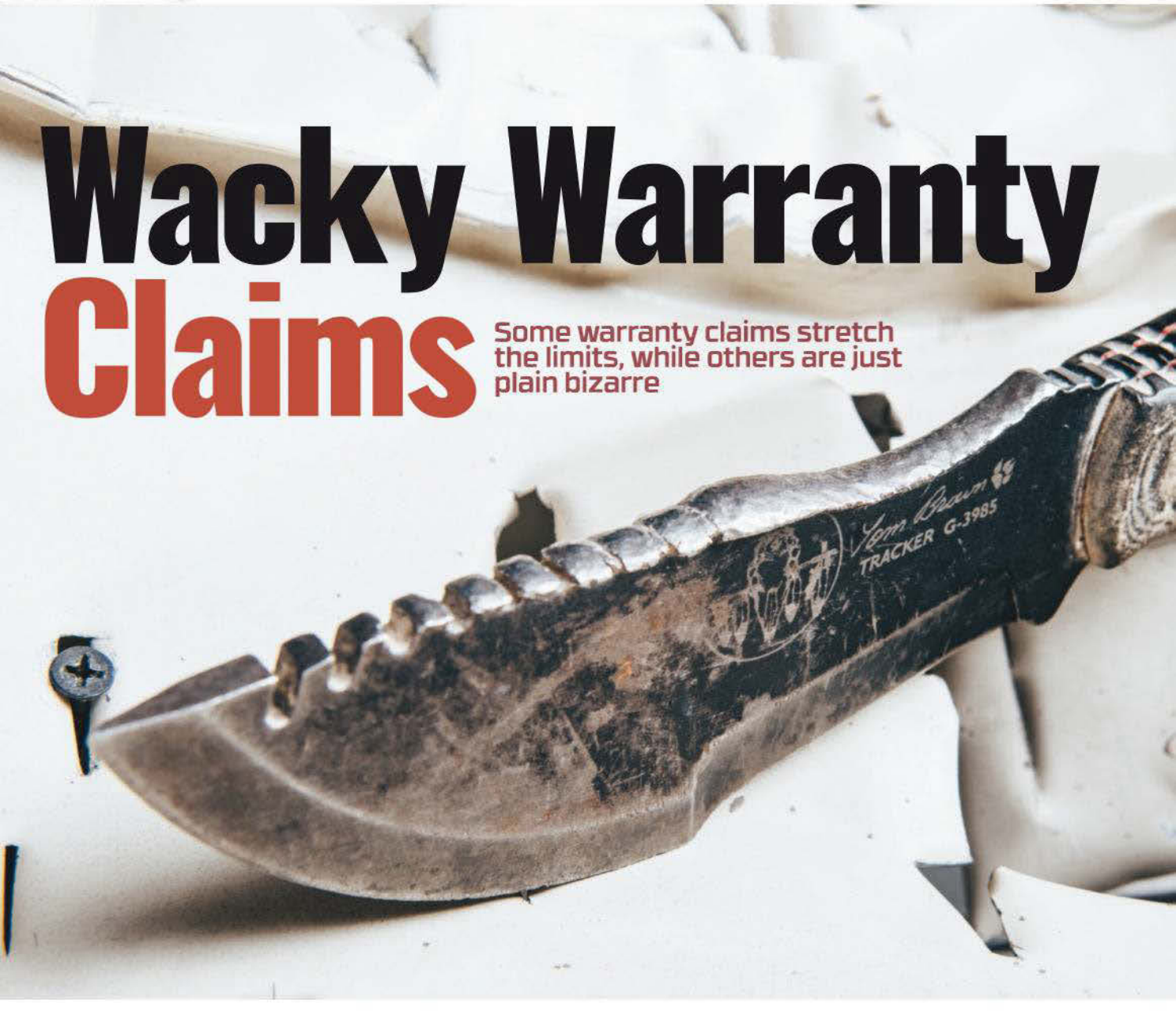
Complete Blacksmithing - Knife Making Tools Source
Blade Steels - Knife Scales - Tongs
Hammers - Anvils - Forges
Kirinite
Raffir®
juma
BONE & HORN
G10 Composites
Knife Handle Fasteners
BLACKSMITHS DEPOT.com
Call 828.667.8868

INTRODUCTION TO BLADESMITHING
Accredited by the American Bladesmith Society, Inc.
NOVEMBER 3RD THRU NOVEMBER 14TH, 2025
NEW ENGLAND SCHOOL OF METALWORK
7 Albiston Way, Auburn, Maine 04210
Instructor: ABS Mastersmith, Timothy Potier
for additional Class Schedule and Registration Information
Contact: Dereck Glaser (207) 777-3375 or
Email: dglaser@newenglandschoolofmetalwork.com
or www.americanbladesmith.org
Mon. – Fri. 8am to 5pm, no class on the weekend. • Skill level: Beginner & up
Intro to Bladesmithing is a two-week course designed for anyone interested in making high quality, hand-forged blades and includes lecture and hands-on work, all taught by ABS Master Smiths. Metal selection, blade function and different blade design will be discussed. Hand forging to shape, normalizing, heat treating, grinding and tempering will all be taught. These semi-finished blades will be tested for their cutting ability, edge holding, hardness and flexibility. Handles and guards are not taught in this course but will be thoroughly discussed and students should be prepared to venture into a Handles and Guards course next.
American Bladesmith Society, Inc.®

BY **MIKE HASKEW** BLADE® FIELD EDITOR

Wacky Warranty Claims

Some warranty claims stretch the limits, while others are just plain bizarre



A TOPS Knives Tom Brown Tracker was lost during an IED explosion in Iraq. The soldier involved returned later to where the explosion occurred and recovered the knife, quite a bit worse from wear, from a local who had found it. "We swapped the soldier a new one and still have that knife [above] here today," the company's Craig Powell said.

It's an honorable option, a sensible aspect of a purchase contract, but can be the source of confusion, head scratching and plain ridiculousness.

The warranty is the buyer's insurance policy. It's the seller's willingness to stake a reputation for quality on the performance of the product—in this case, a knife—or at least that's what it's meant to be. However, there are times when real life strains what is actually believable. So, when we explore the nature of the warranty with some of the finest knife companies in the world, a few of their warranty claims simply flirt with the edge of reason.

Wacky warranty claims, contentions from supposedly "dissatisfied" customers, are out there. Frankly, when some of these are brought to light, they are simply unbelievable. Give a nod to customer creativity, but then get real and consider what happens to a solid performing knife that is not simply put to good use, hard work and tough labor. Beating a knife with a hammer, soaking the handle and blade in corrosive liquid for an extended period, or shooting the defenseless edged tool with a gun are all beyond the pale. Follow such escapades with a dose of sheer audacity and what you get are warranty claims that would make a rational individual shake his or her head.

"A customer put a MagnaCut blade in a glass of saltwater for seven hours and claimed the rusting and pitting should be covered by our warranty!" recalled Anne Reeve of Chris Reeve Knives. "Another requested we replace the packaging of the parts he ordered because they smelled too strongly of perfume or lotion. A customer sent a knife in for a re-blade, and the original blade had an arrow

At Chris Reeve Knives, reputation is everything, and the company stands by its knives. But let's sanity check. Warranties are not "get out of jail free cards" for new knives. "We try to keep consistency in our warranty, but we do sometimes vary on case-by-case situations," Anne explained. "Over the years we have tightened things up a bit because often we felt we would give an inch and the customer would take a mile."

Still, going out of their way to accommodate, the folks at Chris Reeve Knives have had some remarkable experiences. "Mostly the customers who push back are simply rude," Anne related. "Some just hang up or threaten to sell their knife. A customer informed us once that they had cut very acidic fruit multiple times and refused to clean the knife afterwards. They were furious we would not warranty their now rusted blade. Another customer took his brand new Umnumzaan and stabbed in into a tree. He then pried it 90 degrees to 'tip test' it. The tip snapped, and he claimed we should warranty the blade because what he did should not be considered misuse or abuse."

Among unusual requests that Chris Reeve Knives went beyond the call of duty, or warranty, to make right, Anne has great memories. When a customer sent a 5.5-inch Green Beret in for recoating and it was lost in return shipping, the company made a custom iteration of the discontinued 5.5-inch knife from a 7-inch Green Beret blade

Anne Reeve, Chris Reeve Knives

blank. A sheath was available from the company archives and both were sent to the customer. When Reeve knives were abused by U.S. Customs officials, the company removed the scratches caused by bouncing around loose in transit, making the owner happy even though there was no warranty obligation. After an Army Special Forces soldier used his Yarborough to cut a live electric cable during a mission, he sent in the damaged knife with $50 asking for repairs. The company sent the $50 back along with a new knife.

"That original knife lives in my safe deposit box now," Anne smiled. "On a few occasions we have older knives returned for sharpening and we can tell that the knife has been lovingly sharpened so many times

and a smiley face welded onto it."

Really? Try a few more from Chris Reeve Knives. A customer complained that the phosphor bronze washers of his Sebenza had stains on them and simply would not accept that it was normal patina. He also complained that the knife was not sharp and he had to sharpen it himself. He ground half the blade away and then said he should get a completely new knife. A customer shot his knife with a 9mm pistol and then sent the company a photo of the broken knife while requesting a new one under the standard warranty.

"TURNS OUT HE WAS USING THE HAMMER SIDE OF A HATCHET AS HIS BATON."—CRAIG POWELL

After an Army Special Forces soldier used his Chris Reeve Yarborough to cut a live electric cable during a mission, he sent in the damaged knife with $50 asking for repairs. The company sent the $50 back along with a new knife. Anne Reeve keeps the original knife, shown here, in her safe deposit box.

"Normal blade finish wear is not covered under warranty," Daniel Winkler observed. "Working knives should look used." The Winkler Hunter Axe LT shows some normal finish wear here. (Covert image)

that the blade is worn out. We have replaced the blades. When we made the One Piece Range, the paperwork specifically said that it was not a throwing knife and breakage from throwing would not be covered by warranty. A couple of times we had knives returned that were broken in two. The dings made it quite obvious that the knife had been thrown. Back then, we would replace the knife and give the customer a verbal slap on the wrist."

Though Reeve, like other companies, has found it necessary to scrutinize warranty requests more closely in recent years, the dedicated effort to make the customer happy remains strong. At Chris Reeve Knives, the warranty is, as Anne puts it, "phenomenal."

JUDGMENT CALLS

When did the rules change? Where does the line between normal expectation and radical knife recklessness blur?

"We've had a few forgeries sent to us for repairs," commented BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-of-Fame® member Daniel Winkler of Winkler Knives. "Reactions from customers can get hot when they learn they have been duped. Not many warranty requests are really 'crazy'; normal sharpening or sometimes fixing a damaged tip. People also request a re-finish for worn blades. If a knife fails for any reason we will either fix it or replace it, and normal blade finish wear is not covered under warranty. Working knives should look used."

Winkler is sensitive to certain situations and sees extraordinary conditions for what they are. "On a few occasions we have sent replacement knives without receiving damaged ones back," he remarked. "One was a military user that used his knife to destroy a communications location in a war zone. He fried the power supply, and it fused the knife in the connection. Another was a hiker who saved his dog in a rockslide. His knife fell to the

"A CUSTOMER SENT A KNIFE IN FOR A RE-BLADE, AND THE ORIGINAL BLADE HAD AN ARROW AND A SMILEY FACE WELDED ONTO IT."—ANNE REEVE

Anne Reeve said a customer put the MagnaCut stainless steel blade of a Chris Reeve knife in a glass of saltwater for seven hours and claimed the rusting and pitting should be covered by the company's warranty. Of course, like all stainless steels, MagnaCut stains less but is not stain proof. Quite understandably, the warranty request was denied.

BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-of-Fame® members Karen Shook and Daniel Winkler

bottom of a gorge, so we replaced it, too. A third was used in a home situation where a man used his Winkler knife to stab an intruder to save his family. His knife was held as evidence, so we sent him a new one."

There lies the real judgment call in rendering the warranty verdict. Does the customer's story pass the simple test of reasonableness? If so, most companies might feel a pang of compassion and try to resolve the request in the interest of good customer relations. Still, it's a tough challenge sometimes. As much as a customer might feel slighted if a warranty request is dishonored, the maker might well feel used when the circumstances are not plausible or strain the normal standards that most people would accept.

"We go out of our way to promote positive customer relations," Daniel added. "We have replaced or refunded knives and axes that we probably shouldn't have due to how they were damaged in abuse, like prying or throwing. We will normally take the hit, but if it happens again we do not honor any warranty."

CASE-BY-CASE

At TOPS Knives, warranty requests are evaluated with the best outcome in mind. "Our philosophy on our warranty is that we have some things that will void a warranty or won't be covered under warranty, but we still handle them all on a case-by-case basis," remarked general manager Craig Powell. "The people that are honest and level with us are way more likely to get their issue handled under warranty—even if it shouldn't be—than people that are rude or clearly lying to us.

"I always find it funny when someone says something happened to their knife and then the actual damage to the knife in no way matches their description," Powell continued. "Like, maybe they think we don't actually use or test our own gear and so we don't know what would cause certain things to happen. But really, in the end very few people that contact us with an issue treat us poorly. So the vast majority get help under warranty."

Powell remembers certain circumstances that were somewhat unusual prior to a warranty request. "When I had only been working here for a year or two, I took a call from a guy that was concerned about an issue with his Silent Hero. I talked to him for probably 15 minutes trying to figure out what was wrong. He kept saying that the knife was getting deformed and all he was doing was [batonning the blade spine to make] firewood. It probably took me longer than it should have, but I finally thought to ask what he was using as a baton. Turns out he was using the hammer side of a hatchet as his baton. So, a thick piece of metal is what he was using rather than a stick. I chuckled to myself and then we talked through the process of having a hatchet in your hand and choosing to use a knife to process firewood rather than the hatchet. He said 'Oh!' Then he basically apologized and said he understood. We

"A MAN USED HIS WINKLER KNIFE TO STAB AN INTRUDER TO SAVE HIS FAMILY. HIS KNIFE WAS HELD AS EVIDENCE, SO WE SENT HIM A NEW ONE."—DANIEL WINKLER

A tornado destroyed a home and carried away a safe full of knives, including several TOPS Knives models. Two to three years later, the safe was found. The knives were intact and basically undamaged. When TOPS was contacted for help with slight rust on the blade and engraving, the company obliged at no cost.

A closeup of the blade and edge damage the Chris Reeve Knives Yarborough incurred after being used by the SF operative to cut a live electric cable is a tribute to the toughness of the company's knives.

Back to the TOPS Tom Brown Tracker that was lost in the Iraqi IED incident: the local who originally found it after the explosion used it to split wood. The saw teeth had basically been mushroomed out of existence from the local beating on the knife with a piece of metal. Considering how the U.S. serviceman originally lost the knife, TOPS fulfilled the warranty.

A TOPS Knives Black Rhino was lost when a desert barracks burned to the ground. The scales were completely gone and the knife could not be repaired. TOPS sent the destroyed piece back to the serviceman along with a brand-new Black Rhino like this one.

One customer stabbed his brand-new Chris Reeve Knives Umnumzaan (though not this particular one) into a tree and pried it 90 degrees to 'tip test' it. The tip snapped and he claimed the company should warranty the blade because what he did was "not misuse or abuse." Naturally enough, his claim was denied.

didn't end up fixing that knife for him, but that was because he realized what he had done and probably kept it as a reminder or trophy."

On another occasion, a tornado destroyed a home and carried away a safe full of knives, including TOPS models. Some two to three years later, the safe was found. The knives were intact and basically undamaged. When TOPS was contacted for help with slight rust on the blade and engraving, the company obliged at no cost. Hikers have been known to lose TOPS knives on the trail and then miraculously find them months later. When the owner of one of these calls for warranty assistance, the TOPS folks fix the knives up, cleaning and refurbishing before sending them back in the context of a lesson learned: hold onto your valuables while out in the woods, especially your knife.

EXTREME SITUATIONS

Military experiences have brought up several warranty requests, and these are sometimes caused by extreme situations. A Tom Brown Tracker was lost during the horrific explosion of an IED (improvised explosive device) in Iraq. The soldier involved was a chaplain, who returned some time later to the village where the explo-

"ANOTHER REQUESTED WE REPLACE THE PACKAGING OF THE PARTS HE ORDERED BECAUSE THEY SMELLED TOO STRONGLY OF PERFUME OR LOTION."—ANNE REEVE

sion occurred. An old lady came forward with his knife after an interpreter and a $20 bill did some talking. The knife had been used in splitting wood.

"It was beat to hell," Powell remembered. "The saw teeth had basically been mushroomed out of existence from this lady beating on it with a piece of metal. We swapped the soldier a new one and still have that knife [above] here today."

A Black Rhino was lost when a desert barracks burned to the ground. The owner recovered the knife. Its scales were completely gone and the knife could not be repaired. TOPS sent the destroyed piece back to the serviceman along with a brand-new Black Rhino.

"While our policy isn't a no-fault policy, we still cover most issues," Craig said. "We know what we're making is quality, and we strive for that on every knife. So anything that a customer's knife should be able to do but doesn't is going to get covered."

In the broadest sense, the warranty works both ways. It protects buyer and seller and invokes the sense of quality and pride of craftsmanship, with reasonable performance expectation and use. There are outliers, but for the most part both knifemaker and knife user work together with warranties to achieve positive resolutions.

For the contact information for the knife companies in the story, see "Where To Get 'Em" on page 45.

For the latest knives, knife news, trends and more, visit ***blademag.com,*** BLADE®*'s popular Instagram page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***X (Twitter).***

BLADE

3M · BADER · BALDOR · BURR KING · DEERFOS · DAMASTEEL · DYNABRADE · ELECTRO CHEM ETCH · EVENHEAT · HARDCORE PRODUCTS · HERMES · KALAMAZOO · KLINGSPOR · MERIT · NORTON · PEARL · STANDARD ABRASIVES · SURGI-SHARP · VSM · WALTER · WILTON

TRU-GRIT©
THE LEADING EDGE IN ABRASIVES AND KNIFEMAKING SUPPLIES
SINCE 1978
760 East Francis Street, Unit N
Ontario, California 91761
(909) 923-4116
trugritinc@gmail.com
ABRASIVE BELTS, BLOCKS, DISCS, PADS, ROLLS, STONES & WHEELS · ADHESIVES · BLADE BLANKS · BUFFERS · BUFFING WHEELS · CARBON FIBER · COMPOUNDS · DAMASCUS · ETCHING SUPPLIES · KILNS · GRINDERS · HANDLE MATERIALS · HARDWARE · HEAT TREATING PRODUCTS & SERVICES · KNIFE CASES · KYDEX · LINERS · MACHINES & ACCESSORIES · MOSAIC PINS · PARTS · SAFETY PRODUCTS · SCOTCH-BRITE™ · SHARPENING SUPPLIES · SHEETS · STEELS · TITANIUM & MUCH MORE

MAKER
MATERIAL SUPPLY

• Unique selection of natural and synthetic materials for makers
• Over 99% of orders ship within 1 business day
•Earn rewards with our MakerBucks VIP loyalty program
•Small family business with a 100% satisfaction guarantee
@MakerMaterialSupply

Granbury, TX 682-205-1030
info@makermaterialsupply.com
MakerMaterialSupply.com

BY **MIKE HASKEW** BLADE® FIELD EDITOR

>> IMAGES COURTESY OF EMERSON KNIVES, INC., UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

● The Emerson brand goes much deeper than knives. From left: Ernest, Megan, Mary, Lucas and Rachel.

BLADES IN THEIR BLOOD

The Emerson Family shares decades and generations in knives

Through the years, the name Emerson Knives has come to represent outstanding craftsmanship, quality and overall excellence in the knife industry. And each member of the Emerson family has contributed in his and her own way.

"They grew up in the shop, both Megan and Rachael while my shop was at home, and Lucas was born after we opened our production factory," Ernest Emerson remembered. "So we fenced off a corner in Mary's office for him as a baby and a toddler. They have all worked in the company since the beginning, and today Mary is the overall manager, Megan is director of marketing, Rachael is operations director, and Lucas is engineering and is being groomed to run the shop. Me, I'm the government mule."

For some it would be enough to say with pride that the family has built the Emerson Knives brand together, each contributing in his or her own way. But the Emersons have taken their commitment to excellence and the already incredible story of their enterprise to a new level. Each one of them has completed an Emerson original, a knife of their own from concept to finish, and Ernest has had the pleasure of watching the extraordinary conclusion of this labor of love and pure knifemaking joy.

"I didn't know any of them would ever want to make a knife," he confessed, "and with their personal lives being so busy outside of work I didn't know if they would ever have time to do something else. Megan is busy raising a family and runs a working ranch in Colorado. Rachael is busy with Jiu Jitsu and finishing up her second degree in nutritional therapy. Lucas is hardcore into training and computer programming, and Mary runs our business, which by itself is a 24/7 job, and still manages to cook dinner, keep our house in order, and even fits in a round of golf when she can."

Still, with everything else that demands their most precious commodity—time—the Emersons have expressed themselves in the actual completion of the tool that has been the centerpiece of their lives as long as they can remember. It almost feels

(From left) Megan, Mary, Ernest (page 45) and Lucas hold their knives at BLADE Show 2025. Megan, Mary, Lucas and Rachael all had their knives debut at the show. Rachael was unable to attend due to a special family event. (*BLADE®* image)

like destiny, like it had to happen. And despite the headwinds, it has.

EARLIEST MEMORIES

Twenty-four now, Lucas started making knives officially in January 2023, though he has watched and learned since his earliest memories. "I have always had a passion for making things, and with my dad as a mentor knifemaking has become second nature to me. For me, making knives was never a question of 'why?' but of 'why not?'"

At BLADE Show 2025, Lucas chose to debut his newly designed MX-400 model. He wanted to produce a compact knife ideal for everyday carry. "The MX-400 I had on display at the BLADE Show with pearl-handle scales will go into my personal collection," he said. "I did bring three other MX-400s to the show, which I sold via lottery."

Lucas makes knives part time and devotes plenty of energy first to the production company, Emerson Knives, Inc. At some point in the future, he may turn to knifemaking full time, but for now he manages the best of both endeavors. The most difficult part of the knifemaking process, he says, is grinding the blades.

"This is the quickest way to make mistakes," he advised, "and it tends to be quite time consuming. Luckily, I'm pretty consistent and at this point I've got nothing to do but improve. On the other hand, the easiest part of my knifemaking is the hand finishing. This is where I take my time making sure everything is clean, even and symmetrical. I would consider it foundational for the knives I intend to create."

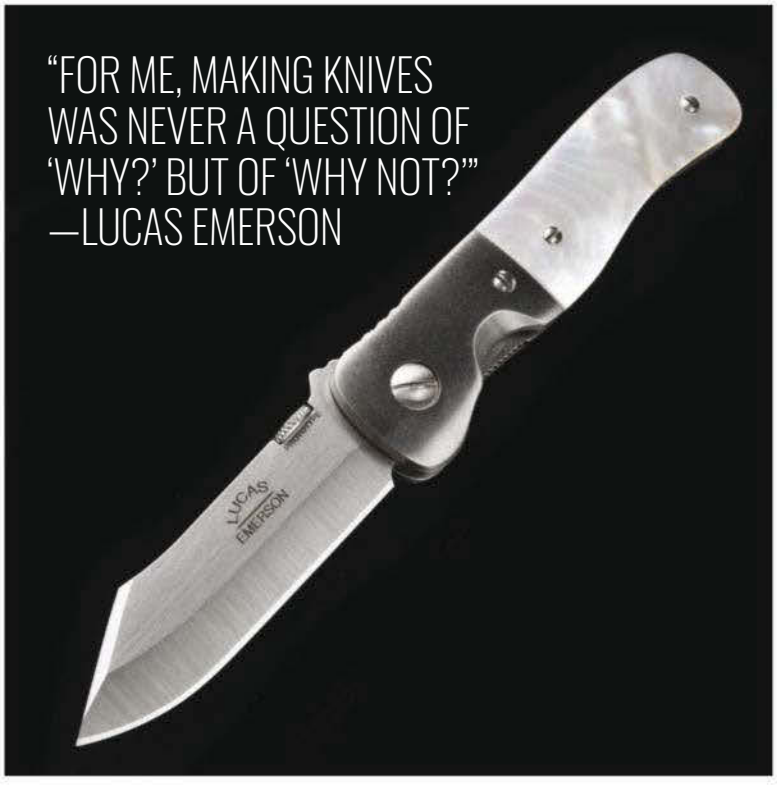
For his next knife, Lucas intends to design a fixed blade for his own everyday carry. "I want something that I can carry with me at all times," he noted, "and which I can rely on for any situation that may arise. It will need to be versatile, easy to maintain and easy to conceal on my person."

Stay tuned!

IRON LOTUS

Rachael Emerson Hardin has been making knives for about 20 years now, much of her experience being directly engaged in the business. "I started assembling knives when I was in high school," she remembered. "I would leave school after lunch my junior and senior year, drive to work, and assemble until they turned the lights off. I'm still here making knives years later, so I guess you could say I enjoy it."

For years, the idea of designing and finishing her own knife had been in the back of Rachael's mind. "I always had favorite designs of my dad's and thought how cool it would



Lucas Emerson debuted his MX-400, "a compact knife that is ideal for everyday carry," at BLADE Show 2025. He put the one in mother-of-pearl scales he displayed at the show in his personal collection.

Rachael took the knifemaking plunge with her own design that she calls Iron Lotus, and she is enthusiastic about more knives to come. To date, there are two prototypes. It is her first design, and the plan is for her to keep one and possibly sell the other.

be to make something like that but with my own flair," she reflected. "It wasn't until recently when Lucas began coming up with his own designs that it dawned on me—maybe I can try this too! I've been around this my whole life. I know what works and what doesn't. It couldn't hurt to try."

So Rachael took the plunge with her own design that she calls Iron Lotus, and she is enthusiastic about more knives to come. "It's hard to say that this is my favorite yet," she related. "My favorite knives aren't because of the way they look on paper generally. It comes after the production process. Behind the scenes I experience all the hiccups and fallbacks firsthand. Some knives go together like peanut butter and jelly. Others need tweaking."

As for her own creations, the 37-year-old Rachael is optimistic about the future. "Heck yeah, I'm going to make more knives. I live, eat and breathe knives. It's in my blood. Eventually, the Emerson kids will take over the business. Making knives is fun. There is something very freeing about it. And I have the best teacher in the world."

To date, there are two prototypes of Rachael's Iron Lotus. It is her first design, and the plan is to keep one of them and possibly sell the other. "I'm not sure about carrying it because it is a little fancy," she observed. "I have a few ideas that I've been brainstorming. Currently I've been diving deep into Japanese-style blades. I'm a big fan of the Japanese tanto. I love simple designs too, like the gentleman's folder."

"I LIVE, EAT AND BREATHE KNIVES. IT'S IN MY BLOOD."—RACHAEL EMERSON HARDIN

PAYING TRIBUTE

With her completed knife, Megan Emerson Gomez, 41, fulfilled an ambition that had lingered for many years. She has also been captivated by Japanese-style blades and used that energy in her own creation.

Megan parlayed her long-time admiration for tantos into the Shinobi/M-Shinobi. Though she has been involved in making design suggestions for many years, it is the first knife she designed entirely by herself. As she noted, "The CQC-17 model blade design was my idea, and I am sure you can see the similarities in [the Shinobi]."

The Emersons have long treated the knife business as a family affair, including at an early 2000s Guild Show during one of Ernest's knife drawings. At left is the event shot from the side and at right it's shot from in front. From left at right are Megan, Rachael, Mary with Lucas asleep in the baby carrier and Ernest. Among those in the front of the table at left are knife purveyors Bob and Linda Neal, Karen and Jay Sadow and BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-of-Fame® member Dan Delavan.

"I have always been a big fan of the traditional tanto," she commented, "so I thought I would design something with that look. My design is called the Shinobi or M-Shinobi [Ninja]. This was the first knife I have entirely designed, but I have been involved and making design suggestions for many years. The CQC-17 model blade design was my idea, and I am sure you can see the similarities in my latest design."

Megan was positive about the outcome of her completed project from the moment it began, and she looks back at the experience with quiet confidence. "I never once doubted that I could finish it, but there was a moment where I had to decide if I was willing to push forward with a design that really didn't look like a typical 'Emerson.'"

Staying the course, she produced an exceptional piece and recalls that the most challenging aspect of the experience was paying tribute to history. "The most difficult part was respecting the traditional tanto shape while still making it feel like mine. The style carries serious weight. It's steeped in warrior culture, precision and intention. I wanted to channel that strength into something functional, modern and personal. Getting the balance right between tradition, aggression and clean design took the most time and thought. The easiest part then was handing it over to my dad. Once the design was dialed in, I knew exactly who should bring it to life."

MOM'S TIME

Each of the Emerson children accomplished an ambitious task that required a step up in devotion to the art and craft, the imagination and precision, that come together in a completed knife. Then, of course, Mom tried her hand as well, and the effort produced a beauty.

"I just started making knives about a year ago," Mary remarked. "I have been around knives and knifemaking for years and years, so I kind of had a head start on things. I wanted to make a knife for a long time but it was hard to find the time. I've had lots of ideas and designs just sitting on the backburner for quite a few years."

At long last, Mary's time did come. "I really have liked our CQC-15 and the Persian-esque blade styles, and I liked our Specwar handle," she noted. "I like the curved and recurved blades, so my two designs, the Denali and the Falcon, reflect my likes in blade designs.

"Grinding the blade was the hardest part. It's the dirtiest and most gritty part of the process. Getting one side ground the way I wanted it still left the other side to match up. The easiest part was the design. That was an easy day for me."

During one grinding session, Mary toyed with the idea of halting the project—but only for a moment. "Ernie kept coming in and checking my grind lines. I told him to get out," she smiled, "and I locked the grinding room door!"

Mary's next knife adventure, though she will probably never be full time due to all her commitments to the business, is a fixed blade that is small enough to wear on her belt while riding her horse.

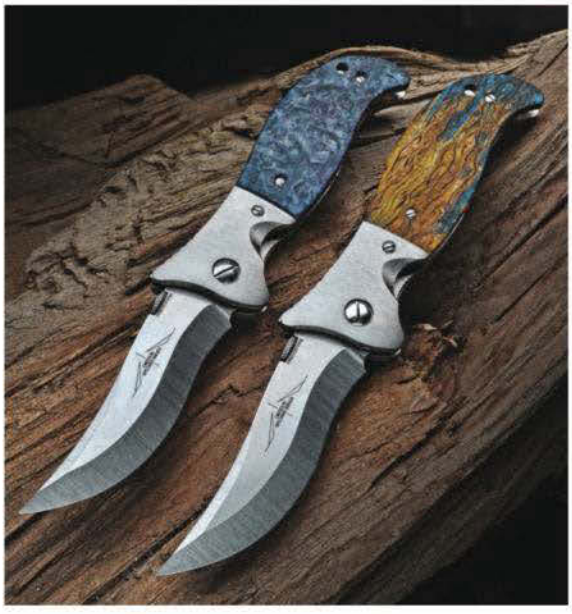
THE NEXT MISSION

Along with Ernest, Mary looks at the body of work that surrounds the family, the business enterprise with so many facets and opportunities, the work of a lifetime, and the possibilities of the future. And yes, there is something else. "Additionally," she stated, "I'm very proud that my children are so interested in carrying on the family legacy. My next mission is to get the grandkids interested and involved. I'm very much looking forward to that."

Meanwhile, Ernie surveys the current scene with satisfaction and gratitude. He wanted to be surrounded by a family of knifemakers and that has actually come to pass. His quiet observation has made the situation even more satisfying.

"I never expected any of them to make knives, but deep down of course I wanted them to," he reflected. "In any endeavor you undertake, if your heart is not in it you will never have the same enthusiasm and drive than when you are doing something you love and want to do. It is very satisfying because I never pushed any of them to pursue the craft. All of them chose to do it of their own accord, and that makes it even better."

Just to put the experience in perspective, Megan, Rachael and Lucas validate their father's approach. They confirm that he encouraged,



Mary's partiality to curved and recurved blades is reflected in her two designs, the Denali and the Falcon, the latter here in two handle iterations. "Grinding the blade was the hardest part," she noted. "Getting one side ground the way I wanted it still left the other side to match up." During one grinding session, she considered halting the project—but only for a moment. "Ernie kept coming in and checking my grind lines. I told him to get out," she smiled, "and I locked the grinding room door!"

advised and taught but never forced a single grind, pin or hand finish on them.

"I wanted to design a knife for as long as I can remember," Megan said, "and I think my whole life he has been training me to make knives and run the business. I have been involved in the business since I was a little girl. I watched him grinding knives in our garage, and the ladies we hired assembled knives in our living room."

Rachael offered, "My dad has always provided feedback to me over the years. His father and sister, my grandpa and aunt, were both teachers. So, it's always been something he has done."

Lucas was a hands-on learner. "From a young age, I remember my dad allowing me to help him with his own custom knives," he recalled. "This is where I spent most of my time learning, not only the craft but also the principles behind Emerson designs. I work on my own now, but if I ever have any questions my dad is there to provide the best answers he can. He is an excellent teacher in this regard and has always been my go-to person for advice."

In a most rewarding way, the knife life of the Emerson family has come full circle. The generations have discovered and honored that common thread, one that binds them together like nothing else.

For more information, contact Emerson Knives, Inc., Dept. BL11, 1234 254th St., Harbor City, CA 90710 310-539-5633 (order-related inquiries) info@emersonknives.com, emersonknives.com.

For the latest knives, knife news, trends and more, visit ***blademag.com,*** BLADE®*'s popular Instagram page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***X (Twitter).***

BLADE

WHEN YOU'RE READY FOR A DOUBLE STACK 1911, THINK

NJG
NOTJUSTGUNS.COM

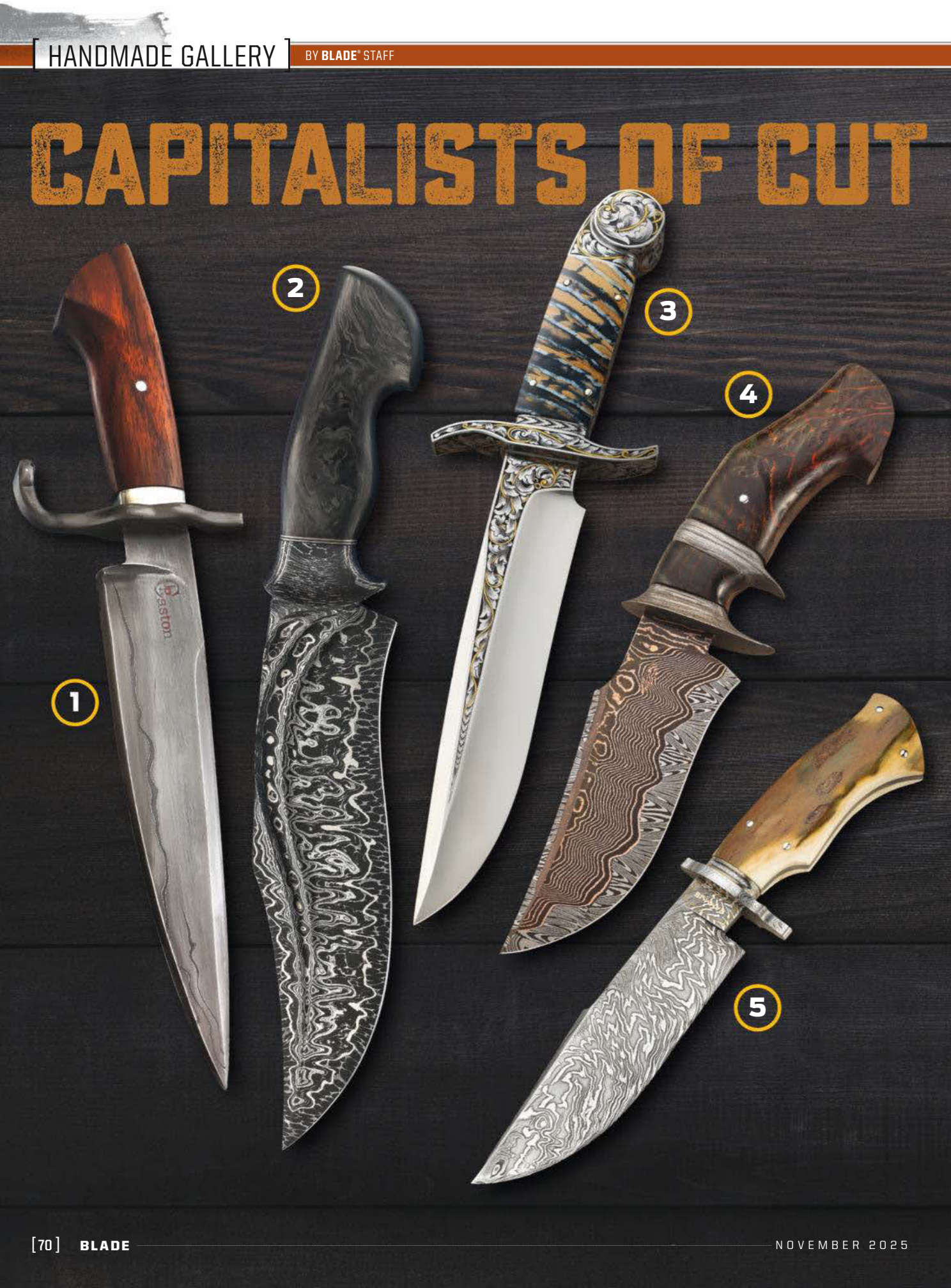
DOUBLE STACK 1911s IN STOCK FROM:

Phoenix Trinity	Gun Crafters	Taran Tactical Inn.	BG Defense
Nighthawk	King's River	Watchtower Firearms	Dark Forge
Alpha American	Jacob Grey	Miller Precision	Cardinal
Staccato 2011	Combat Precision	Race City Defense	CNC
Atlas Gunworks	Wilson Combat	Viking Firearms	

NOTJUSTGUNS.COM

BY **BLADE**® STAFF

CAPITALISTS OF CUT



Fighters are some of the sexiest knives going. With many, even their curves have curves. Those less curvy make up for it with straight-line designs that look born to perform. If sex really does sell, fighters are the capitalists of cut.

1 Randy Caston's fighter features a 9 5/8-inch blade of 1084 carbon and 15N20 nickel-alloy steels. Scales: blackwood. The guard is mild steel. Overall length: 14.75 inches. Randy's email: jrcaston@bellsouth.net. (SharpByCoop image)

2 A nickel damascus with a Dragon Skin core forged by Adam Deville sporting a snakelike fuller completes the 10.5-inch recurve blade of Jordon Berthelot's integral fighter. The scales are marbled carbon fiber. Overall length: 16.5 inches. Jordon's email: jbblades@yahoo.com. (SharpByCoop image)

3 Dennis Friedly outfits his fighter-art knife in a 7.75-inch blade of hollow-ground CPM 154 stainless. The scales are mammoth tooth and the guard is 416 stainless. The engraving is by Ray Cover Jr. Overall length: 13 inches. Friedly's email: friedlyknives@hotmail.com. (SharpByCoop image)

4 A 6-inch recurve blade in a full-flat-ground crushed W's and copper damascus forged by Baker Forge & Tool top off a sub-hilt fighter by Patrick Harp of P. Harp Designs. The handle is basswood burl and the guard and sub hilt are wrought iron. Overall length: 11 inches. Patrick's email: pharpdesigns@gmail.com. (SharpByCoop image)

5 ABS journeyman smith Peyton Ramm opts for a 6 1/8-inch blade of a Transition damascus of 1084 carbon and 15N20 nickel alloy steels for his fighter. Handle frame: damascus. Scales: mammoth ivory. Guard: crushed W's damascus. Fittings: same as guard but w/24k gold and silver inlays. Overall length: 10.75 inches. Peyton's email: pramm87@gmail.com. (Jocelyn Frasier image)

6 Peregrine by Steven Ramos offers up a 6-inch blade of hollow-ground RWL-34 stainless steel in a green canvas Micarta® handle with red fiber spacers. Bolster: 416 stainless steel. Overall length: 10.5 inches. Steven's email: srkknives88@gmail.com. (SharpByCoop image)

7 A 5.75-inch blade in convex-ground Riptide Ultra Coppermascus by Baker Forge & Tool and a black Richlite guard and handle comprise the double-edge fighter by Dan Tompkins of Evolution Cutlery. The copper spacers are also by Baker. Overall length: 11 inches. Dan's email: evolutioncutlery@gmail.com. (SharpByCoop image)

For the latest knives, knife news, trends and more, visit ***blademag.com****,* BLADE®*'s popular Instagram page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***X*** *(Twitter).*

BLADE

TOMAHAWK!

November-December 1975 issue's story covered hawks of the American Indians

Arnold M. Chernoff offered a wide-ranging review of the American Indian tomahawk in the November-December 1975 issue of *The American Blade*.

As Arnold pointed out in "Tomahawk!" the hawk was a weapon and tool used to maximum effect as the former by both American Indians and American colonists, often more savagely by the early colonists than the Indians. Arnold outlined a plethora of hawk designs with roots in the American West, from stone-headed war clubs of the Crow, Sioux and Cheyenne to metal-bladed models used by the Crow, Sioux, Blackfoot, Osage and Canadian Cree. Examples included everything from the foregoing stone-headed versions to fancier ceremonial types.

The Indians were not limited to using the stone-headed versions exclusively early on when English settlers first landed at Jamestown in 1607. As the settlers learned to their chagrin, the Indians had metal hatchets, probably French trade goods that had filtered south. In fact, Chernoff wrote, Capt. John Smith, Jamestown's "noted chronicler," was credited with introducing the word *tomahawk*, gleaned from the Indian vocabulary.

As time passed the hawk evolved from hammer poll to spike heads, and eventually the pipe hawk, the latter which Chernoff stated had an English origin around 1700. Some presentation pieces were for important chiefs, including one made for Tecumseh by the British sporting a gold-inlaid panel in the blade with his name in script.

Later in the 19th century the pipe hawk began to lose its practical function among Indians and assumed more of a ceremonial role as a "scepter, mace or badge of authority." In recent years, though, the tomahawk has enjoyed a renaissance in both the custom and factory knife industries, with some of the finest examples fetching top dollar among users and collectors.

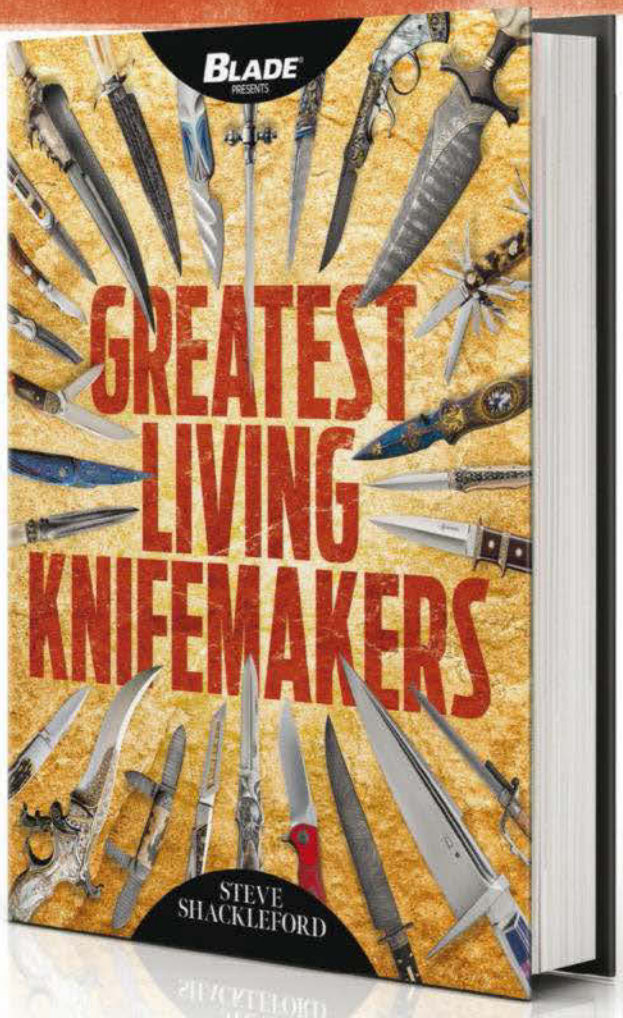
● Crow Chief Plenty Coups holds a fine tack-decorated pipe tomahawk circa 1880 during a visit to Washington, D.C. (Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, D.C. image)

● From left: brass-headed pipe tomahawk, probably Oglala Sioux; a mammoth pipe hawk measuring 13 inches from the tip of the pipe bowl to the bottom of the edge that belonged to a Sioux chief who reportedly ranged anywhere from 6'5" to as tall as 7'1"; and a double-pierced Plains tomahawk attributed to the Sioux. (from the Arnold M. Chernoff Collection)

For the latest knives, knife news, trends and more, visit ***blademag.com****,* BLADE®*'s popular Instagram page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***X (Twitter).***

GREATEST LIVING KNIFEMAKERS

Exclusively from BLADE® Magazine!



ISBN 9781951115197
Cover Price $65

This unique collection profiles 26 of the best custom knifemakers the world has to offer—who they are, how they got started, the highlights of their careers and, of course, their knives. Here, BLADE Magazine editor Steve Shackleford profiles the greatest knife designs, the "gurus" of cutlery, their knifemaking techniques, and the countless other things that can help you understand the insiders' world of custom knives.

COLLECTIBLE HARDCOVER WITH DUST JACKET

256 FULL-COLOR PAGES

Available only at **shopblade.com** or call **920.471.4522**

SHOW CALENDAR

BY BLADE® STAFF

Note: Entries with an asterisk (*) include knives and knife accessories as the main/sole focus. Entries with two asterisks (**) include knife seminars or symposiums, cutting or balisong competitions, auctions or other knife-related events.

OCTOBER

OCT. 4 STATE LINE, PA Mason-Dixon Knife Club. Contact William C. Crilley 717-217-9375 crill9@hotmail.com.*

OCT. 10-11 SALT LAKE CITY, UT The 2025 BLADE Show West, Salt Palace Convention Center. Visit bladeshowwest.com.* **

OCT. 10-12 NEW STANTON, PA Allegheny Mountain Knife Collectors Association Annual Knife Show, New Stanton Fire Hall. Contact Jim Sinclair 412-605-4231 sinclairknives@yahoo.com.*

OCT. 17-19 SEVIERVILLE, TN Smoky Mountain Forging Festival, Smoky Mountain Knife Works. Visit https://www.pigeonforge.com/event/smoky-mountain-forging-festival/.**

OCT 18 MIDDLETOWN, MD The 10th Annual All Forged Knife Show and Auction presented by the William F. Moran Jr. Museum & Foundation. Contact Gordon Conner 240-818-7665 or Mike Deener 301-693-6367 or visit www.williammoranmuseum.com.* **

OCT. 24 WOODLAND HILLS, CA Friday Night Blade Affair - Warner Center Marriott. Visit RECON1.com

OCT. 25 LAS VEGAS, NV Art Knife Invitational, Palms Casino Resort. Visit aki.show.*

OCT. 25-26 WOODLAND HILLS, CA California Custom Knife Show - Fall, Warner Center Marriott. Visit RECON1.com.

OCT. 26-27 MINNEAPOLIS, MN Twin Cities Knife Show, Midwest Knifemakers Guild, Bloomington Armory and the Minnesota Army National Guard. Visit www.midwestguild.com. *

NOVEMBER

NOV. 7 CLINTON, SC The BLADE Tactical Knife Show (BTAC), the Clinton House, from the team behind the BLADE Show, BLADE Show West and BLADE Show Texas, a specialized tactical knife show featuring factory and custom knives, including over 25 of the industry's top custom knifemakers. For more visit canconevent.com.

NOV. 8-9 TULSA, OK Wanenmacher's Tulsa Arms Show, Expo Square (Tulsa Fairgrounds). Visit tulsaarmsshow.com.

NOV. 15 ELLAVILLE, GA Ellaville Knife Show, Harrison Woods Event Center. Contact Kevin "The Knife Doctor," 229-942-7702.*

DECEMBER

DEC. 6 LEXINGTON, KY Kentucky Custom Knife Show, Embassy Suites Lexington Green.

2026

JANUARY

JAN. 23-26 LAS VEGAS, NV The NSSF SHOT Show, Venetian Expo + Caesars Forum. For the trade only. Visit shotshow.org.

JAN. 30-FEB. 1 LAKELAND, FL The 48th Annual Gator Knife Show for Modern, Custom, & Antique knives, RP Funding Center (formerly Lakeland Center). Contact Alan 954-609-6485 tlviking@aol.com or John 954-579-5662 and/or visit Gatorknifeshow.com.*

FEBRUARY

FEB. 20-21 OKLAHOMA CITY, OK Oklahoma's Largest Knife Show 2026, Oklahoma City Fairgrounds. Visit oklahomaknifegroup.com.*

FEB. 27-28 LEWISBURG, PA Keystone Blade Association Knife Show, The Inn at Lewisburg (formerly the Country Cupboard Inn). Contact Skip Fryling 570-204-1544 knifeguy248@yahoo.com.*

FEB. 26-MARCH 1 NUREMBERG, GERMANY The IWA Outdoor Classics 2026. For the trade only. Call +49 9 11 86 06 82 11 iwa@nuernbergmesse.de, iwa.info/en.

MARCH

MARCH 7-8 MYSTIC, CT Annual NCCA Mystic Knife Show, Mystic Hilton. Contact Matthew Chase, hogtoothknives@gmai.com, ncca.info/events/.*

MARCH 20-21 FORT WORTH, TX The 5th Annual BLADE Show Texas, Fort Worth Convention Center. Visit bladeshowtexas.com.* **

MARCH 27-29 JANESVILLE, WI The 2026 Annual Badger Knife Show, Holiday Inn Express& Janesville Conference Center. Contact Robert G. Schrap, Dept. BL11, POB 511, Elm Grove, WI 53122 phone/fax 414-479-9765 badgerknifeclub@aol.com.*

APRIL

APRIL 11-12 TULSA, OK Wanenmacher's Tulsa Arms Show, Expo Square (Tulsa Fairgrounds). Visit tulsaarmsshow.com.

APRIL 11-12 EASTON, PA Lehigh Valley Knife Show, Charles Chrin Community Center of Palmer Township. For info call 267-714-4441 or visit paknifeshows.com.*

MAY

MAY 16-17 NORTH CANTON, OH Ohio's Longest Running Knife Show, Western Reserve Cutlery Association, MAPS Air Museum. Contact Mike Headaches21@sbcglobal.net.*

JUNE

JUNE 5-7 ATLANTA, GA The 45th Annual BLADE Show, Cobb Galleria Centre, I-285 & US 41, one exit off I-75 across from the Cumberland Mall, adjacent to the Renaissance Waverly Hotel. World's largest show of handmade, factory and antique knives. A combined total of nearly 1,000 exhibitor tables and booths. Join the world's greatest national and international knifemakers, cutlery manufacturers, collectors, collections and knife lovers. Site of the BLADE Magazine 2026 Knife Of-The-Year® Awards for factory knives, the BLADE Show Custom Knife Judging Competition, the BLADE Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame© inductions and much more. Host to BLADE University, the annual ABS meeting and more. Seminars include the BLADE Show World Championship Cutting Competitions, 10th Annual Battle for Bali Champion, how to use knives, how to make them, etc. Contact BLADE®, c/o Alicia Newton blade@bladeshow.com, and/or visit bladeshow.com.* **

SEPTEMBER

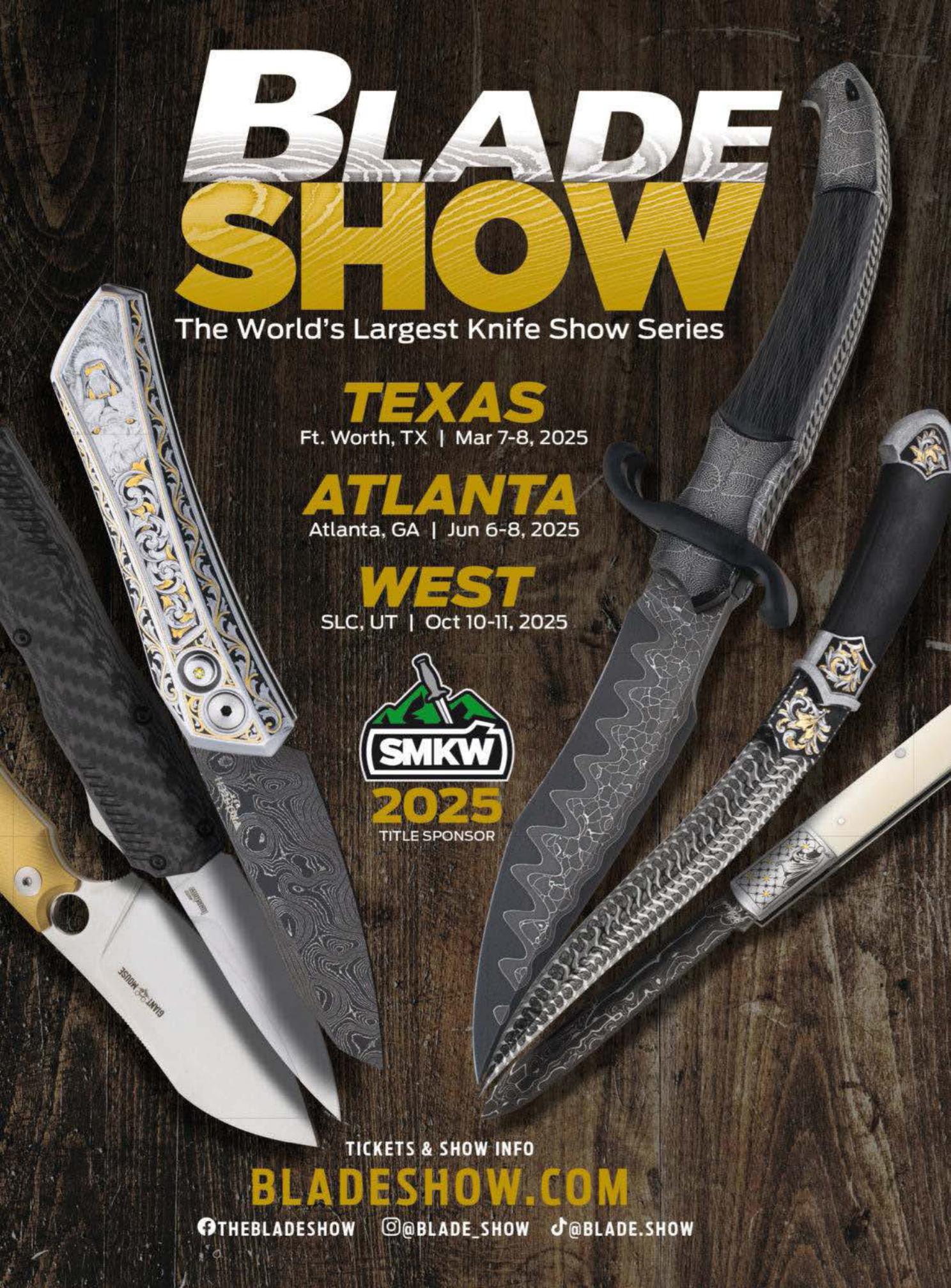
SEPT. 26-27 EASTON, PA Lehigh Valley Knife Show, Charles Chrin Community Center of Palmer Township. For info call 267-714-4441 or visit paknifeshows.com.*

***Editor's note: Due to possible last-minute cancellations, if you plan to attend any of the shows listed, please contact them for more information.*

*To ensure timely publication of your knife show in the "Show Calendar," **BLADE**® requests that you e-mail all pertinent information concerning your show in written form—dates, locations, etc.—at least three months before the show takes place to **BLADE** c/o Lori McDaniel at lori@gundigest.com and/or Steve Shackleford at steve@blademag.com. **BLADE** depends on the shows themselves for prompt and accurate information.*

*For the latest knives, knife news, trends, and more, visit **blademag.com**, BLADE®'s popular Instagram page **@blade_magazine**, and on **Facebook** and **X (Twitter)**.*

BLADE


BLADE SHOW
The World's Largest Knife Show Series
TEXAS
Ft. Worth, TX | Mar 7-8, 2025
ATLANTA
Atlanta, GA | Jun 6-8, 2025
WEST
SLC, UT | Oct 10-11, 2025
SMKW
2025
TITLE SPONSOR
TICKETS & SHOW INFO
BLADESHOW.COM
THEBLADESHOW @BLADE_SHOW @BLADE.SHOW

Blade Shoppe

MARKETPLACE

For Advertising Information contact: Lori McDaniel, Advertising Sales
lori@gundigest.com
715.498.3768

Advertising Deadlines: January 2026 Issue - 10/29/2025

BLUE RIDGE KNIVES INC.
314 LEE HIGHWAY • DEPT BL • MARION, VA 24354
PHONE 276-783-6143 • FAX 276-783-9298
WWW.BLUERIDGEKNIVES.NET

• A FAIR AND REPUTABLE DEALER FOR OVER 40 YEARS
• NO COLLECTION TOO LARGE OR TOO SMALL
• CUSTOM/ANTIQUE/COMMEMORATIVES
• IMMEDIATE PAYMENT FOR KNIVES

KNIVES WANTED

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

THREE WAYS TO READ!
PRINT ONLY, DIGITAL ONLY, OR PRINT+DIGITAL

NEW SUBSCRIBERS:
BladeMag.com/subscribe

TO RENEW:
BladeMag.com/renew

Buy-Sell-Trade
$ Paying top dollar $

*We are not affiliated with the "R.W. Loveless Knives" logos and products being made after Bob's death or any late period knives.

Largest Selection In The World Of Vintage Knives by
BOB LOVELESS
The Only Exclusive Loveless Dealer. Knives From Riverside, Lawndale, & Delaware!
www.BobLovelessKnives.com
John Denton 706.781.8479 (24-7) John@BobLovelessKnives.com

"JOHN DENTON IS THE WORLD'S FOREMOST AUTHORITY ON LOVELESS KNIVES."
BLADE MAGAZINE

SCAGEL
Knives, Carving Sets, Axes, Marbles and Loveless Knives
WANTED
Gordon White
P.O. Box 181, Cuthbert, GA 39840
229-732-6982, anytime

WARNING
BEWARE
COUNTERFEIT
Edmund Davidson Integral Knives.
To see if You have been ripped off,
Contact Edmund at,
davidson.edmund@gmail.com

BLADESHOW
BLADESHOW West
BLADESHOW Texas
FOR DETAILS ON ALL THREE EVENTS, GO TO
BLADESHOW.COM
CONNECT WITH US AT #BLADESHOW

Knife Knowledge Found Here!

KNIVES 2026, presented by **BLADE**, has more of what you're looking for: knives, knives ... and more knives! In-depth stories, new products and stunning custom designs in full color, along with contact info for the featured makers, combine to make this a treasured reference you'll reach for again and again. Order today!

BLADE® PRESENTS
46th Edition
Knives
2026
The World's Greatest Knife Book
1000+ PHOTOS OF CUSTOM FOLDERS, FIXED-BLADES, SWORDS & CHEF'S KNIVES
EDITED BY JOE KERTZMAN
+NEW FACTORY KNIVES FOR HUNTING, CAMPING AND EDC

PRODUCT NO. S8464

Order online at ShopBlade.com or call 920.471.4522

ALSO AVAILABLE ON amazon IN PRINT AND E-BOOK!

WHERE TO NET 'EM

A.G. Russell Knives, Inc.
www.agrussell.com
ag@agrussell.com

A.G. Russell
The Cutting Edge®
www.cuttingedge.com
ce-asst@cuttingedge.com

Admiral Steel
www.admiralsteel.com
sales@admiralsteel.com
Widest Range of Stock for Blade Needs

Adams International Knifeworks - AIK
www.adamsknifeworks.com
adamsknifeworks.com@gmail.com
(618) 656-9868
Automatic & Customized Knife Specialists

ADV Tactical
Andre de Villiers
www.advtactical.co.za
Facebook - Andre de Villiers
Facebook Group - ADV SOB BADNESS
IG - advtactical
adv44sales@gmail.com
Butcher SOB folders and button lock flippers

Artknives.com
www.artknives.com
fred@fredeisenleather.com

BladeGallery.com
www.bladegallery.com
www.bladeconnection.com
www.epicedge.com

Buckeye Engraving
www.BuckeyeEngraving.com
Make Your Mark
Manufacturer of Custom Hand Stamps, Dies and Brands

Cutlery Specialties
www.restorationproduct.com
dennis13@aol.com
Renaissance Micro-Crystalline Wax/Polish, Dennis Blaine

Ed Fowler Knives
www.edfowler.com
eafwb@wyoming.com
High Endurance Performance Knives

Farina Fine Arts
www.farinafinearts.com
studio@farinafinearts.com
One of a kind, fine art, collectible knives

Knife Center
www.knifecenter.com
info@knifecenter.com

RECON 1
www.Recon1.com
sales@Recon1.com
Your number one source for Custom Knives, Shirogorov Knives, and WingManEDC Knives

Red Hill Cutlery
Home of the World's Largest Pocketknife
www.redhillcutlery.com
jrbasham@bbtel.com

Santa Fe Stoneworks
www.santafestoneworks.com
Sales@santafestoneworks.com
Unique one of a kind gemstone handled cutlery

Sooner State Knives
www.soonerstateknives.com
ssknives@swbell.net

Stcroixblades.com
info@stcroixblades.com
Large Collection Buyer, & Retailer
Knives, & Japanese Swords

To List Your Website Please Contact:
Lori McDaniel:715-498-3768 • lori@gundigest.com

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

A
A.G. Russell Knives 5
Admiral Steel 8
American Bladesmith Society, Inc . 57
Arizona Custom Knives 56

B
Blacksmith's Depot 57
BladeGallery Inc. 15
Bradford Knives 45
Buckeye Engraving 81

C
Carol Watson's Orange Coast Auctions 35
CAS Iberia 51
Case Knives 2
Charlie's Old Pawn LLC 81
Chris Reeve Knives 8
CobraTec Knives LLC 35

D
Dan Morphy Auction 11

E
Emerson Knives 68
Evenheat Kiln, Inc. 80

F
Fallkniven 37

G
GiantMouse Knives 5

J
Jantz Supply/Knifemaking.com 23
Jantz Supply/Knifemaking.com 27

K
KA-BAR Knives 3
Kershaw Knives/ Zero Tolerance Knives 83
Knife Treasures-Carlos Lopez 84

M
Maker Material Supply 63

N
Nashville Tactical Lounge 31
NC Tool Company 81
Niagara Specialty Metals 31
Nordic Knives 7
Not Just Guns 69

O
Olamic Cutlery 51
Ontario Knife Company 7

P
Plaza Cutlery 80
Pro-Tech Knives, LLC 37
PVK.COM 9

R
Randall Made Knives 80

S
Silencer Central 29
Smoky Mountain Knife Works 19
Spartan Blades 80

T
TOPS Knives 17
Tru-Grit 63

V
VZ Grips 50

W
White River Knife & Tool Inc 63

Don't Miss the Next BLADE MAGAZINE
ORDER YOUR ADVERTISING TODAY!

The advertisers' index is provided as a reader service. Occasional last-minute changes may result in ads appearing on pages other than those listed here. The publisher assumes no liability for omissions or errors.

Lori McDaniel
Advertising Sales
715-498-3768
lori@gundigest.com

Issue: January 2026
Ad Deadline: 10/25/2025

Salt Bath Kiln

- TAP and Solid State Control
- Oxygen Free Heating Treating
- Exceptional Heat Distribution

evenheat
Better by Design
evenheat-kiln.com

7" x 7"
18" DEEP

Plaza Cutlery 2025 Spartan Halloween is coming!
Also available are a few of 2024 and 2023 along with a great selection of Spartan, Randall and Chris Reeve knives!
Spartan and Reeve knife displays by Blade Hall of Fame member Dan Delavan now available!

PlazaCutlery.com
(714) 292-1113
dan@plazacutlery.com

Randall Made Knives

4857 South Orange Blossom Trail
Orlando, Florida 32839

407-855-8075

NEW 80TH ANNIVERSARY CATALOG – PRICE $2.00
INTL. MAILING – CATALOG US $6.00 **http://www.randallknives.com**

BLADE
THE WORLD'S #1 KNIFE PUBLICATION

NEXT IN *BLADE*®

MAILED TO SUBSCRIBERS IN EARLY NOVEMBER

KITCHEN KNIFE ISSUE

- KITCHEN UTILITY KNIVES
- CHEF'S KNIVES: WHY THE *WA?*
- NEW FACTORY-CUSTOM COLLABORATIONS
- MARINE-DESIGNED RANDALL AIRMAN
- TOP KITCHEN KNIVES UNDER $100
- SHARP PUUKKOS
- KNIVES LIE, DAGGERS. DON'T *PART II*

BLADE

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION

1. Publication Title: Blade
2. Publication Number: 1064-5853
3. Filing Date: 10/1/25
4. Issue Frequency: Monthly
5. Number of Issues Published Annually: 12
6. Annual Subscription Price: $27.98
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication:
   Gun Digest Media LLC
   5583 W. Waterford Ln., Suite D
   Appleton, WI 54913
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher:
   Gun Digest Media LLC
   5583 W. Waterford Ln., Suite D
   Appleton, WI 54913
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor
   Publisher: Jim Schlender, 5583 W. Waterford Ln., Suite D Appleton, WI 54913
   Editor: Steve Shackleford, 5583 W. Waterford Ln., Suite D Appleton, WI 54913
   Managing Editor: Laura Peltakian, 5583 W. Waterford Ln., Suite D Appleton, WI 54913
10. Owner:
    Gun Digest Media LLC
    5583 W. Waterford Ln., Suite D
    Appleton, WI 54913
11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities: None [X]
12. Tax Status. The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes:
    [X] Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
    [ ] Has Changed During the Preceding 12 Months
13. Publication Title: Blade
14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: Oct-25

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation:	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)	10,292	7,145
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside Mail)		
(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541. (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	7,342	7,053
(2) Mailed In-County Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	0	0
(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS	714	21
(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g. First-Class Mail)	0	0
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3) and (4)]	8,056	7,074
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)		
(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside County Copies included on PS Form 3541	0	0
(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541	0	0
(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g. First-Class Mail)	0	0
(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail	338	71
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15 (1), (2), (3), and (4))	338	71
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c. And 15e.)	8,394	7,145
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))	1,898	0
h. Total (Sum of 15f. And 15g.)	10,292	7,145
i. Percent Paid (15c. Divided by 15f. times 100)	96.0%	99.0%

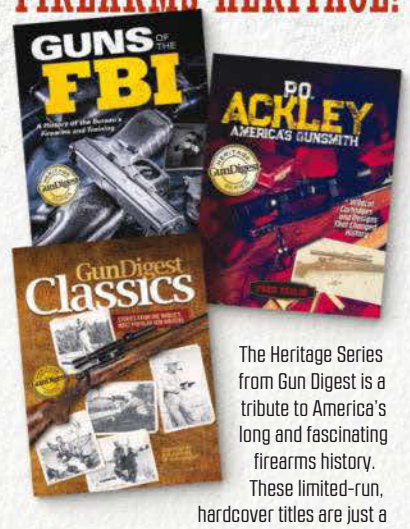
16. Electronic Copy Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Paid Electronic Copies	2,795	2,502
b. Total Paid Print Copies (Line 15c) + Paid Electronic Copies (line 16a)	10,851	9,576
c. Total Print Distribution (Line 15f) + Paid Electronic Copies (line 16a)	11,189	9,647
d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c X 100)	97.0%	99.3%

[X] I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

17. Publication of Statement of Ownership:
    [X] If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the Nov. 2025 issue of this publication.
18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner:
    Jim Schlender, Publisher, 8/9/25

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

CELEBRATING AMERICA'S FIREARMS HERITAGE!



The Heritage Series from Gun Digest is a tribute to America's long and fascinating firearms history. These limited-run, hardcover titles are just a few of the many great books and digital downloads brought to you by Gun Digest Books, the industry's №1 firearms books publisher!

Order online at GunDigestStore.com or call 920.471.4522

NC Tool Company Inc
6133 Hunt Rd Pleasant Garden, NC 27313
336-674-5654 | 800-446-6498
www.nctoolco.com

NC Knifemaker 21 Gas Forge
-Easy on fuel
-Reaches welding temperature

NC Knifemaker Anvil
-Classic traditional design
-Shipping weight 70 lbs

A Bladesmithing Combination
Place Your Order Today!

CHARLIE'S OLD PAWN

AUTHORIZED DEALER OF KNIVES
Microtech Knives
Heretic Knives
Pro-Tech Knives
Chaves Knives
Blue Ridge Knives

AUTHORIZED DEALER OF FIREARMS
Davidson's Inc
Lipsey's Wholesales
Cosaint Arms
Guncrafter Industries
AIM Outside

CHARLIESOLDPAWN.COM | 972-800-2040
Bullion/Coins: info@charliesoldpawnllc.com | Firearms: info@charliesfirearms.com
Precious Metals Dealer – Silver Bullion & Coins | FFL/SOT Dealer – Rare Firearms & Knives

Buckeye Engraving
Stamps manufactured to fit your needs.

Custom Marking Products
Customize your blades with a stamp by Buckeye Engraving

Steel Hand Stamps
Leaving a Lasting Impression

Visit our website for more information or e-mail Stamps@BuckeyeEngraving.com to request a quote.

BuckeyeEngraving.com Ph: 330-677-5685

SHEEPDOG RESPONSE

AWARENESS • ASSESSMENT • ACTION • ANALYSIS

Curriculum that empowers people

Addressing the skills you need so you

A series by Green Beret (Special Forces Sniper) and Tim Kennedy (former top 5 UFC Middleweight).

BINGE WATCH IT ON

RECOILTV

WWW.RECOIL.TV | DOWNLOAD THE FREE APP TODAY

BCM® SIGHTMARK® vertx® PULSAR® INFORCE®

PRESENTED BY

to protect and preserve human life.

and your families can live without fear.

AVAILABLE ON Download on the App Store · Download on Apple TV · GET IT ON Google Play · Roku · fire tv · Chromecast

Return of the CUT THROUGH

Iconic Spyderco design appears on new H.L. Dalis exclusive

PARA MILITARY 2
BLADE LENGTH: 3.45"
BLADE STEEL: SPY27 stainless
BLADE GRIND: Full flat
EDGE CONFIGURATION: PlainEdge
LOCK: Compression Lock
HARDWARE CONFIGURATION: Stainless steel pocket clip, standoffs and liners
WEIGHT: 3.8 ozs.
CLOSED LENGTH: 4.82"
KNIFE TO KNOW: Made in a limited edition of 1200
MSRPS: $177.50 for each unit numbered 1 to 49, $175 for each numbered 50 to 99 and $172.50 for each numbered 100 and up

Spyderco has made its first "cut-through" blade design since its highly collectible Q, R and S series from roughly a quarter century ago to celebrate the 100th anniversary of H.L. Dalis Inc.

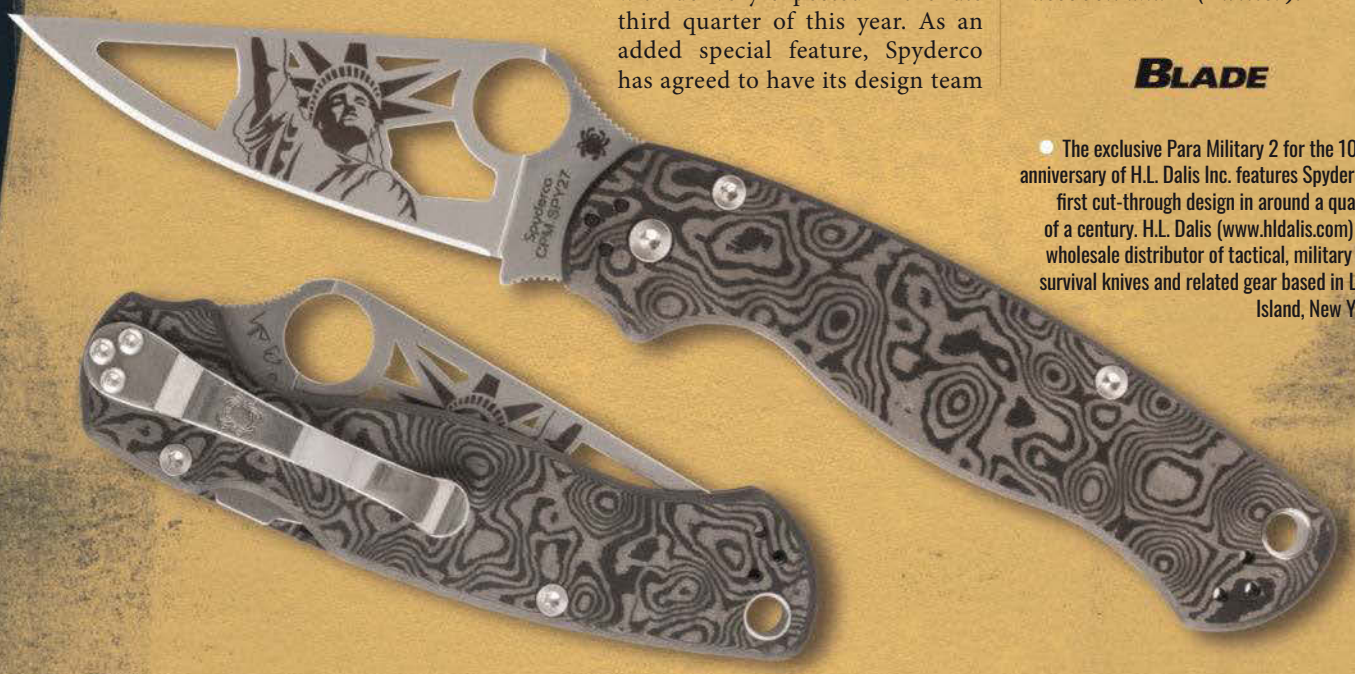
The cut-through graces the blade of a Para Military 2, including perforations both of and flanking an engraving of the Statue of Liberty. "As a New York company, we thought the Statue of Liberty cut through was appropriate," stated Jon Blumenfeld, president of H.L. Dalis Inc., "as it is the most universal symbol of what the USA stands for."

There will be 1,200 units in all, with delivery expected in the late third quarter of this year. As an added special feature, Spyderco has agreed to have its design team sign one box for every 50 units, and H.L. Dalis will include one signed boxed unit at standard volume cost with every 51 units—50 plus one signed boxed unit—ordered by its dealers.

For pre-order and order information contact Jon Blumenfeld, hldalis@aol.com or Loretta Berardi lberardi@hldalis.com. Earliest orders get priority for best allocation and earliest possible delivery.

For the latest knives, knife news, trends and more, visit ***blademag.com****,* BLADE®*'s popular Instagram page* ***@blade_magazine****, and on* ***Facebook*** *and* ***X (Twitter).***

BLADE



The exclusive Para Military 2 for the 100th anniversary of H.L. Dalis Inc. features Spyderco's first cut-through design in around a quarter of a century. H.L. Dalis (www.hldalis.com) is a wholesale distributor of tactical, military and survival knives and related gear based in Long Island, New York.

kershaw

NEW

LAUNCH IRIDIUM

7038

Clean design elements meet automatic action with the Launch Iridium. Its black-anodized aluminum handle scales create an appealing profile. Activate the premium MagnaCut blade at the push of a button, every time. The spear point blade pierces through work tasks easily, and the blade's working finish hides scratches you accumulate. Additional details elevate the design even further, including a custom pivot and a gray-anodized backspacer with a lanyard hole. Take the Launch Iridium on your adventures with a deep-carry pocket clip, an American-made automatic ready for your everyday cutting tasks.

- Made in USA automatic knife; lightweight design
- Premium CPM MagnaCut powdered metallurgy blade steel excels in edge retention, toughness, and corrosion resistance; working finish hides even more hard use scratches than stonewashed
- Black-anodized aluminum handle scale; custom pivot and gray-anodized aluminum backspacer with lanyard hole
- Low-profile push button makes it harder for blade to accidentally deploy; deep-carry pocket clip is easily reversible for left/right carry

NEXT LEVEL

KERSHAWKNIVES.COM

Knife Treasures

ALEX GEV: MAKER

HAND MADE KNIVES

Maker: Warren Osborne
Engraver: Sergey Danilin
Photographer: SharpByCoop

CLopez@KnifeTreasures.com
www.KnifeTreasures.com